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LIFE
OF
WELLINGTON**
by
W. H. Maxwell

LONDON
HENRY FROWDE
HODDER & STOUGHTON



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INTRODUCTION

IN a little village in North Wales there lived during the first half of the nineteenth century an honest blacksmith renowned in all the countryside as the only man who ever hammered the Iron Duke. We can picture him in the village inn, telling the story for the thousandth, perhaps the ten thousandth time, for he lived to a great age, and was never weary of recalling the one romantic incident of his simple life. "Now, Hughes," we can hear his cronies say, "tell us how you licked the Duke," and Hughes, nothing loth, would cast his memory back sixty or seventy years to the time when young Master Wesley came from Eton College to spend his holidays with his grandfather, Lord Dungannon, at Brynkinalt. He and Hughes were of an age, and struck up a friendship that was interrupted, as boyish friendships are apt to be, by a lively quarrel. The two came to blows, and after a tough struggle the young blacksmith, no doubt in harder training, "downed" the future hero of a hundred fights. And the old man in telling the story, though proud of his boyish triumph, was prouder still of the fact that he and young Master Wesley were even better friends after the fight than before.

Arthur Wesley (or Wellesley, as in later life he preferred to spell his name) was a shy, dreamy boy in those days; but, as one or two anecdotes seem to show, he dearly loved a fight and bore no malice whichever way the tide of fortune turned. Perhaps he owed something of his ready pugnacity to his Irish ancestry, for although descended from a Rutlandshire stock his family had for centuries been resident in Ireland. His grandfather had been raised to the peerage as Baron Mornington, and his father, who succeeded to the title, had been promoted to an earldom. But the family was very poor, and Arthur, the fourth son, was sent at an early age to a preparatory school kept by a Mr. Brown, at Chelsea, where the fees were low and the training correspondingly inefficient. That the family fortunes had fallen to a low ebb at this time we may gather from the fact that when Arthur's elder brother, Lord Wellesley, visited the boy at school, his tip amounted to the modest sum of one shilling.

Although Mr. Brown's training was, it would seem, none of the best, it does not appear that either at Chelsea, or afterwards at Eton, where young Wellesley remained only a short time, the boy

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cared to avail himself of his opportunities. And when on the death of his father his mother found it necessary to remove, for the sake of economy, to Brussels, his disposition still seems to have been anything but studious. Of the two years or more which he spent subsequently in the military school at Angers we have little or no record; he certainly made no great impression either upon the masters or upon his companions.

The fact is that as a boy and even a young man Arthur Wellesley gave no indication of his future greatness. It is even doubtful whether he desired a military career, and one of his early friends tells us that his wishes, if he had any, were in favour of a civilian's life. He was one of those cases in which genius does not develop except under the impulse of a great emergency. Although he was steadily promoted in the army, and was generally regarded as a capable and conscientious soldier, he would probably have died a major-general had not his extraordinary talents been forced into activity by the opportunities of Indian service. If there is one moral quality that stands out more conspicuously than another in the fine character of the great Duke, it is his single-hearted devotion to duty. Duty was the watchword of his life. It spurred him to great deeds of positive achievement, and negatively to even nobler deeds of self-abnegation, in the critical days when India seemed to be slipping from our grasp, under the attacks of Tippoo and the Mahrattas. The campaigns of this period marked him out as a great soldier and a great leader of men.

His subsequent career is fully described in the following pages, the work of a fellow countryman who saw service as a captain in the Peninsula and at Waterloo. On retiring from the army Maxwell entered the Church and issued from time to time many works on historical and biographical subjects. His *Life of Wellington*, first published in 1839, and many times re-issued, is, however, his principal title to remembrance. It is a biography of a soldier by a soldier, and as a military memoir has few equals among the great biographies of the language.

HERBERT STRANG.

LIFE OF WELLINGTON

CHAPTER I

ARTHUR WELLESLEY, Duke of Wellington, third surviving son of Garret, second Earl of Mornington, was born at Dangan Castle, in the county of Meath, on the 1st of May, 1769; the year that gave birth to Napoleon Buonaparte, Marshal Soult, Mehemet Ali, and the late Marquis of Londonderry.

His earlier education commenced at Eton; whence, after receiving the rudiments of his education, he was removed to the care of the Reverend H. Michell, A.M., vicar of Brighton. In due time, he was placed in the Military College of Angers, in the department of the Maine and Loire, as a fitter school for one already destined to the profession of arms. Here he acquired that perfect knowledge of the French language which was so serviceable to him in after-life.

That Wellington, beyond a fair and creditable proficiency, exhibited no marked superiority at Angers, is acknowledged, while Napoleon, his contemporary at Brienne, if the assertions of his biographers be correct, displayed martial propensities in everything connected with his studies or his sports. Had the latter fallen at Toulon, would his snowballings have been remembered and recorded? Most boys of strong nerve and lively disposition are essentially martial in their amusements; for a field-game is not without its resemblance to a battle. Here, however, strength rather than science obtains the mastery. A year or two confers a temporary superiority on the boy: for a time he maintains a leadership; this advantage is lost as he approximates to manhood; and the bully of a school is rarely found in after-life among the bravest and most fortunate of his race.

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On the 7th of March, 1787, Arthur Wellesley obtained his first commission, being gazetted to an Ensigncy in the 73rd regiment; and on the 25th of the following December he was promoted to a Lieutenancy in the 76th. In the succeeding month he exchanged into the 41st, and on the 25th of June was appointed to the 12th Light Dragoons. On the 30th of June, 1791, he was promoted to a company in the 58th Foot; and on the 31st of October, 1792, obtained a troop in the 18th Light Dragoons.

At the general election, which occurred during the summer of 1790, he was returned to the Irish parliament for Trim, a borough the patronage of which belonged to the house of Mornington. He sat for the same borough in 1791, 1792, and 1793, and on the 10th of January of the last-mentioned year seconded the address to the throne.

The professional advancement of Captain Wellesley was steadily progressive. On the 30th of April, 1793, he was gazetted Major of the 33rd Foot, on the resignation of Major Gore; and on the 30th of the following September he succeeded to the Lieutenant-Colonelcy of the regiment, *vice* Lieutenant-Colonel Yorke, who retired from the service. His parliamentary career was now interrupted by a summons to attend his duties in the field.

For the last three years the political horizon of Europe had been seriously overcast; affairs daily became more gloomy,—“coming events threw their shadows before,”—and the frightful spread of democratical principles, the murder of the French monarch, the increase of the Republican army to 450,000 men, and the extraordinary success that had attended these raw and undisciplined levies, had roused Britain into energy, and compelled her to prepare herself for a contest, on which not only her liberties but her existence as an empire were in a great degree dependent.

France was fearfully convulsed; the Reign of Terror was at its height; and though frightfully persecuted, the Royalist party still maintained a courage and displayed an attitude of resistance worthy of a better fortune. Hence there was hope that if the Bourbon party were supported from abroad, a reaction might be produced in France, and the alarming spread of Republicanism even

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yet be arrested. To effect this object, an expedition was prepared with all possible despatch for making a descent on the coast of Brittany, the command of which was entrusted to the Earl of Moira.

In June, 1794, the 33rd Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley, embarked at Cork, and landed in the ensuing month at Ostend, whither it was quickly followed by a body of troops under Lord Moira, afterwards Marquis of Hastings, the reverses which had been experienced by the allies rendering reinforcements indispensable. The armies of the coalition, having been driven from the soil of France, were at this moment making a vain effort to maintain themselves in Hainault and Austrian Flanders; but the defeat of the Austrians at Fleurus on the 26th of June, 1794, decided the fate of these countries, and the allies fell back precipitately on Dyle. The intended descent upon the French coast had never been attempted, and the failure of the Duke of York in the Netherlands caused the notion to be altogether abandoned. The destination of the troops was accordingly changed from France to Ostend. The enemy, however, was already in possession of Ypres on the one side and Brussels on the other. Near the former place, the Austrian General Clairfayt had just sustained three defeats, and had retired on Ghent. Walmoden, the Hanoverian commander, being thus compelled to evacuate Bruges, had marched to join him. The Duke of York, whose misfortune it was to have been called upon to command so perfectly inefficient an expedition, was, in consequence of these defeats, driven from his position at Tournay to Antwerp.

Lord Moira, deciding that the defence of Ostend was of less importance than affording immediate succour to the Duke of York, evacuated that town on the 29th June, and with 8,000 men marched by Bruges to Ghent, whence he embarked on the *Scheldt*, and joined the camp of His Royal Highness before Antwerp. It was here that Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley, who accompanied his regiment from Ostend, first saw an army in the field. Here it was that he received his first lesson in practical warfare; and although this his first campaign offered but

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few opportunities of distinction, he did not fail to avail himself of all that presented themselves. In every affair in which the 33rd Regiment was engaged, it was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley; and on the river Neethe, in a warm affair near the village of Boxel, and in a fierce skirmish on the Waal, it did good service. At the close of the campaign he was selected by General Sir David Dundas to cover, with the brigade to which his regiment was attached, the memorable retreat from Holland; a duty which he performed to the full satisfaction of that intrepid soldier. This movement was commenced in the middle of January, during a winter of unusual rigour, and was peculiarly trying to the tempers and constitutions of men already exhausted by continued fatigue, and without the clothing or comforts which might have helped to mitigate the severity of the task.

The sufferings endured in this retreat were most acute. The route from the frozen banks of the Lech to the barren provinces of Gueldreland and Over-Yssel was over desert and flat heaths, with but few houses on the way, and those scattered singly or in small hamlets, which afforded little or no cover for the troops. It was a hard frost, and bitter winds and blinding sleet from the north-east directly met them on the march. The casualty of sinking down in a torpor of fatigue, and sleeping the sleep of death, was of frequent occurrence. The duty which devolved upon the young commanding-officer of the rear-guard was consequently one which demanded incessant vigilance. This command, the post of honour in a retreat, stamped the young soldier, even at that early period, as a noticeable man.

On the return of the 33rd Regiment from Holland, Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley was ordered to join an expedition about to sail to the West Indies, under the orders of Admiral Christian. Owing, however, to a long detention, after it had embarked, occasioned by adverse winds, and the sluggishness of the fleet of men-of-war and transports which had to be collected together, it did not positively sail until the middle of December 1725. After having been six weeks at sea in most tempestuous weather, the squadron was dispersed by a violent storm,

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and several of the vessels foundered. The rest, in obedience to their private instructions in such an event, returned to Portsmouth in a very shattered condition. The 33rd Regiment, on being disembarked, marched to Poole, where it was stationed during the remainder of the winter.

In April of the following year, the regiment was again embarked, its destination having been changed to India; but in consequence of severe indisposition, Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley was unable to accompany it. He followed it, however, so soon as his health was sufficiently restored; and having joined it in September at the Cape of Good Hope, accompanied it to Calcutta, where he landed with it in February 1797, holding the rank of Colonel in the army. "Thus," says the accomplished Sherer, in his *Military Memoirs of the Duke of Wellington*, "a star which might have set early in the West in obscurity, and perhaps death, arose in the East with life and brightness." During his voyage out, Colonel Wellesley is said to have passed much of his time in reading, and in studies connected with his profession, and the military history of the country he was about to visit.

Towards the close of the year 1797, the Governor-General of India, Sir John Shore, having projected an attack on the Spanish settlement of Manilla, the 33rd was one of the regiments selected to compose the expedition from Bengal, charged with this service; but on reaching Penang, where it was to rendezvous with other troops sent from Madras with a similar object, orders were received recalling the different corps to their respective presidencies. The reason assigned for this step was, the representation of Lord Hobart, the Governor of Fort St. George, to the Governor-General, that he had great grounds for apprehending that Tippoo Saib, the Sultan of the Mysore, would take advantage of the absence of so many troops, to violate the treaty of 1792, and pour his forces into the Carnatic. In accordance with these orders, the 33rd returned to Bengal; and shortly afterwards Colonel Wellesley proceeded to Madras on a visit to Lord Hobart, who was on the eve of his departure for England. The two months he was absent from his regi-

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ment he was occupied in examining the several military posts and establishments of the Madras Presidency; and having collected much useful information concerning the state of the Carnatic generally, he returned to Calcutta to await the arrival of his eldest brother, the Earl of Mornington, who had been appointed to succeed Sir John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, as Governor-General of India.

One of the first objects that engaged Lord Mornington's attention, after his accession to the Governor-Generalship, was the equivocal attitude of Tippoo Saib, who having repeatedly infringed his treaties with the English government, was now intriguing with Buonaparte, with a view to obtain the aid of a levy of French troops, to assist him in taking possession of the South of India. After many proofs of his enmity to England, the Governor-General wrote to him, in an expostulatory tone, suggesting to him to settle any pending controversy between himself and the East India Company, by means of negotiation; but did not, meanwhile, neglect to prepare for offensive operations, should they be called for. Accordingly, an army was assembled at Vellore, under the command of General Lord Harris, which was prepared to enter the Mysore territory on the shortest notice. In a new treaty, which had been accepted by the Sultaun of the Mysore, it was expressly stipulated that the French mercenaries, who officered the army of the Nizam, should be forthwith dismissed. In spite of these arrangements, he was intriguing with the King of Candahar and Cabul to invade our territories from the north, and with the Mahrattas to make common cause with him against us.

On the 12th of August, 1798, Lord Mornington directed Lieutenant-General Harris, the Commander-in-Chief at Madras, to assemble a large force in the Carnatic. On the 8th of November he addressed a firm but conciliatory letter to Tippoo, intimating his knowledge of the intrigues to which he had been a party, and offering to terminate their disputes by peaceful negotiations. To this and a second communication of a similar import, Tippoo returned no answer. On the 9th January, 1799, the Governor-General addressed to him, from Madras, a third

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letter, which shared the fate of its predecessors, although it terminated with a threat of immediate hostilities if a single day were allowed to elapse without the return of a satisfactory answer.

On the 5th of March, General Harris, having sent Tippoo his ultimatum, commenced hostilities. The hill forts were surrendered without resistance; and when the army of the Carnatic passed the eastern frontier of Mysore, that of the western coast, amounting to 6,400 men, was also marching upon Seringapatam. This force had been assembled at Cannamore under General Stuart, and was destined to combine its operations with those of General Harris. Tippoo's first movement was towards the east, as if to oppose the advance of Harris; but he suddenly broke up from his encampment at Seringapatam, and taking with him the flower of his infantry, marched swiftly towards the division coming from Cannamore, and encamped on the 5th of March close beside them. From the nature of the country, which is full of jungle, it could not be ascertained if Tippoo was himself in the camp. On the 6th, the enemy made a sudden and impetuous attack on the brigade, consisting of three native battalions, of Colonel Montresor, which was posted in advance at Seduseer. The assailed battalions, though vastly outnumbered, stood their ground with great gallantry; and it was not until the arrival of General Stuart that the troops of the Sultaun were overpowered, with a loss of about 1500 men. They numbered 11,000 before the action. The gallant brigade of Colonel Montresor lost only 140 men, yet the combatants on both sides were natives,—a proof of how much discipline has to do with the stability of a military force.

After his defeat at Seduseer, Tippoo, having waited at Periapatam (whither he had retired after his defeat of the 6th) until the 11th, returned to Seringapatam on the 14th of March, and moved thence to meet the Madras army. On marching from Sultaumpet to Malavelly on the morning of the 27th of March, the army of the Mysore was discovered in great force, posted on some high grounds to the westward of the town. At ten o'clock, Tippoo opened a distant cannonade, at the same time threatening with

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his cavalry the British pickets on the right : a supporting corps was pushed forward by General Harris, and a general action resulted. The 83rd Regiment and the troops of the Nizam under Colonel Wellesley, formed and advanced upon the left, supported by the regular cavalry under General Floyd. The right moved forward under the more immediate direction of General Harris : 2,000 of the Sultaun's best trained infantry advanced firmly upon the British 33rd, and came within sixty paces before delivering their fire. The 33rd, led on by their Colonel, charged these Cushoons, bayonet in hand, and overthrew them. The cavalry of Floyd was soon among their broken ranks. Having witnessed the destruction of his best troops by a corps scarcely one-third their number, and retired his guns, Tippoo abandoned the field to his conquerors, and thus ended the battle of Malavelly. The Sultaun left 2,000 of his troops upon the field : the loss of the British was very trifling : some 20 killed, and 80 wounded.

CHAPTER II

ON the morning of the 28th of March, General Harris resumed his movements, having decided on crossing the Cavery by the ford at Sosilay, after the country in his front had been carefully reconnoitred, and reported free from the presence of an enemy. He had ascertained that the Sultaun had been totally mistaken as to the line of march by which the British would approach the capital; for, erroneously believing that their route would be the direct one, he had despatched thither the main body of his army, determined to oppose their advance on his capital, by risking a decisive battle. This was a fatal oversight. He uncovered the best road to Seringapatam; and, unchecked by the presence of an enemy, the march of the British divisions was leisurely effected. The villages through which they passed were stocked amply with provisions,—stacks of forage were everywhere standing in the fields,—not a musket was heard,—and the march seemed rather a military movement through a friendly country, internally

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at peace, than an advance upon an enemy's capital, covered by a force of 50,000 men.

The army arrived before Seringapatam on the 3rd of April, and on the 5th encamped at a distance of 3,500 paces from the western face of the works; having on the right, the contingent of the Nizam, resting on a height, and the extreme left on the Cavery. In front, there were several ruined villages and rising grounds, with an aqueduct running in an easterly direction, within 1,700 yards of the fort, and winding towards the right, until it reached a wooded tope, called the Sultaunpet. The whole of this ground was broken and irregular, affording to Tippoo's skirmishers and rocket-men a safe cover, from which the advanced pickets could be seriously annoyed. Otherwise the British camp was favourably situated—five large topes (groves or thickets) of cocoa, areca, bamboo, and other trees, furnished, within the lines, an abundant stock of materials for a siege—an advantage which no other position near Seringapatam could have afforded.

From the facility which the Sultaunpet and adjacent enclosures offered the Sultaun's troops of annoyance, the broken ground in front of the position was examined by General Baird with a part of his brigade, on the night of the 5th. The whole was found unoccupied; and the general returned to the camp, "after scouring the tope in all directions," without discovering an enemy. Aware of its advantages, the Mussulmans, early on the ensuing morning, re-occupied the tope and ruined village, from both of which they kept up a teasing fusilade, with an occasional discharge of rockets. Some of the latter fell within the tents of the British encampment—and it became advisable to dislodge the enemy from the whole line of posts which they had formed amongst the enclosures.

One column, composed of Her Majesty's 12th Regiment and two battalions of sepoy, with guns, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Shaw, was ordered to attack a ruined village in front of the centre of the British position; whilst the other, led by Colonel Wellesley, and consisting of the 83rd Regiment and a native battalion, *without guns*, was directed to drive the enemy from the

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tope to the left of the village of Sultaunpettah. The failure of this attempt was foreseen by Colonel Wellesley. The ground had not been properly reconnoitred, and the guns were sent with the wrong column—as the bayonet is the best weapon with which to drive an enemy out of houses; whereas grape and canister seem best adapted to clear topes. The darkness of the night was moreover unfavourable to such an operation, and the interior of the tope being everywhere intersected by canals for irrigating the betel-plants, confused the assailants, and left them no alternative but to retire. In so doing, Colonel Wellesley was struck on the knee by a spent ball, and narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the enemy, having wandered for several hours in darkness before he could regain the camp. At break of day, the attack was renewed with complete success, and the Sultaun's troops were driven from all the inclosures they had strengthened.

Alarmed at the turn which affairs appeared to be taking, the Sultaun sent a vakeel to General Harris, pretending not to be aware of the ground for these hostilities: but the General contented himself with referring to Lord Mornington's letters, and proceeded vigorously with the siege.

Immediately after establishing his posts in front of Seringapatam, the Commander-in-Chief detached General Floyd, with four regiments of cavalry (one European), five battalions of infantry, and 2,000 of the Nizam's horse, to Periapatam, to unite with the Bombay army, and secure its advance. This service was ably executed, and the junction with General Stuart effected safely on the 10th. Both these armies, with large supplies, having reached head-quarters, the siege was vigorously pressed on. A sortie, made on the morning of the 22nd, had been repulsed; and a parallel opened within 750 paces of the works. The progress of the batteries was rapid; the approaches had reached within 200 paces of an entrenchment still in possession of the enemy; when General Harris determined to drive them from that post, preparatory to the closer investment of the fortress. Colonel Wellesley, commanding in turn in the trenches, was

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ordered to direct the attack; and proper dispositions were made to storm the entrenchments at sunset.

The troops ordered for the assault moved forward in two columns. During the previous hour, the fire of the English batteries had been turned entirely on the enemy's works, and, ceasing when the advance of the storming party was observed, it was then directed on an angle of the fort, from the guns of which the assailants had most annoyance to apprehend. The attack had been arranged with excellent judgment, and was most gallantly executed. The entrenchments were stormed, occupied by the assailants, and, in a few hours, tolerably secured from the fire of the place.

On the 20th the Sultaun attempted once more to open a negotiation with General Harris. The only terms to which the General would listen seemed hard enough. The French mercenaries were to be sent within forty-eight hours to the British camp; half Tippoo's dominions to be surrendered; the allies to select which moiety they pleased; all disputed claims to be relinquished on the Sultaun's part; all prisoners released; and, lastly, a payment of two crores of sicca rupees, made by two instalments, one in money or bullion on the spot, the other in six months from the signing of the treaty. As security for the fulfilment of these conditions, four of Tippoo's sons, and four of his chief Sirdars, were demanded as hostages. This reply was despatched on the 22nd. On the 28th another proposal for a conference was forwarded by the Sultaun, but occasioned no relaxation in the preparations for the assault, now close upon completion.

On the 30th a battery was unmasked, and commenced breaching the bastion; and on the 2nd of May another was completed, and opened a heavy fire on the curtain to the right. Several guns of large calibre were gradually got to work; and the old masonry, unable to support this well-served and sustained cannonade, began to yield. Masses of the wall came down into the ditch. A breach was reported practicable—and on the 3rd of May the face of the bastion was in such a state of ruin, that preparations were made for an immediate assault; and in a brief letter, orders to that effect were given next morning to Major-

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given nor expected. Dazzled by the glittering of his jewelled turban, a soldier dashed forward and caught the Sultaun's sword-belt. With failing strength, Tippoo cut boldly at his assailant, and inflicted a trifling wound. The soldier, irritated by pain, drew back, laid his musket to his shoulder, and shot the Sultaun dead.

The morning of the 4th of May saw the green-streaked banner of the Sultan expanded from the loftiest flag-staff of the fort. On the 5th, the British ensign was floating proudly on the breeze; for that sun had risen upon a captured city, a routed host, and a dead tyrant; and an empire, acquired by a father's usurpation, was extinguished in the bloody grave of a more perfidious son.

Thus fell the Mysore empire, which had been rendered truly formidable by the military genius and enterprising boldness of Hyder Ali, the father of Tippoo; so long the dread, not only of the surrounding native princes, but even of the British themselves.

General Baird having requested to be relieved, the command at Seringapatam devolved upon Colonel Wellesley, whose active measures and personal influence soon restored the confidence of the inhabitants.

On the capture of Seringapatam, several prisoners were found in the dungeons of Tippoo Sultaun—a brother of his own among the number—and they were at once liberated, without any inquiry being made into the causes of their incarceration. One of the captives, thus delivered from a hopeless bondage, was a Mahratta trooper, called Dhoondiah Waugh. He was an obscure man—one who had entered the service of Hyder—deserted at his death—become a freebooter—committed sundry depredations in the Mysore—was fool enough to listen to the false promises of Tippoo,—returned, was employed, suspected, imprisoned, became a Mussulman, and was then left to perish by a greater villain than himself. No sooner was he at liberty than he resumed his predatory habits, and having collected together a large body of vagabonds of his own order, made a sudden inroad from the province of Bednore, laid that fertile country under contribution, and committed the most inhuman atrocities. Two strong detachments, commanded by Colonels Stevenson and Dalrymple, were

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dispatched to reduce him, the latter of whom succeeded in cutting to pieces 650 of his followers, and driving him across the Toombuddra, into the territory of the Peshwah. The defeat of this brigand left the country in a state of comparative repose.

Nothing is more remarkable in India than the almost magical growth of a predatory force. A single adventurer, with no purse, no possession but his horse and sword, if he have once ridden at the head of a body of freebooters, and got a name for activity and good fortune, is sure to be sought out and followed by all whose feet are "swift to shed blood, and to divide the spoil." Thus in 1800, Dhoondiah rode south again with 5,000 horse, and threatened the frontier of Mysore. The robber chief had now assumed the title of King of the two Worlds. Against this enemy, a force was immediately ordered to take the field, and Colonel Wellesley was appointed to command it. Accordingly, he crossed the Toombuddra with his troops on the 24th of June, followed by another body under Colonel Bowser, with whom he had been ordered to co-operate. Finding from intelligence that had reached him, that if he waited for Colonel Bowser, he might lose the opportunity for striking an effectual blow at Dhoondiah, he pressed forward with his cavalry only, and at Malowny, on the Malpoorba, came on the detached camp of the freebooter; cut up or drove into the river all the combatants he found there; took animals, baggage, etc., and closed the affair by making a party of his European dragoons swim across the river, and seize a boat. By this means he contrived to possess himself of the enemy's guns, which had been transported to the opposite bank before his arrival. After various forced marches, he found himself within a few miles of Dhoondiah's main body on the 9th of September; but was compelled by bad weather and jaded horses to hold his hand for a few hours. After a night's delay, impatient lest his prey should escape him, he overtook Dhoondiah's army, consisting of upwards of 5,000 horse, which was drawn up in a very strong position near the village of Conagull. Having rapidly formed the British dragoons and native cavalry, he decided, by one resolute charge, led on by himself, the fate of the bandit and his

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followers. They were all cut up or dispersed, everything in their camp taken, and Dhoondiah himself, "King of the two Worlds," slain. His body was recognized among the dead, and having been lashed on a galloper-gun attached to the 19th Light Dragoons, was brought into the British camp.

A circumstance most creditable to the humanity of the victor deserves to be recorded. When the baggage of the freebooter was overtaken, a beautiful boy, four years old, was found, and brought to Colonel Wellesley's tent. His name was Sulabuth Khan, and he proved to be the favourite son of Dhoondiah. Not only did Colonel Wellesley afford his present protection to the orphan; but on leaving the East for Europe, he deposited a considerable sum of money with Colonel Symmonds to defray the expenses of his future maintenance and education. Sulabuth grew up a handsome and intelligent youth—was placed in the service of the Rajah of Mysore, and continued in it till his death.

In the month of December of the same year (1800), Colonel Wellesley was appointed to command a body of troops assembled at Trincomalee, in the island of Ceylon, for foreign service. In offering him this command, Lord Mornington gave him the option of accepting or declining it without prejudice to his future interests, observing that it was one which was likely to obtain for him some credit and to be attended with great pecuniary advantages; but learning by a letter from Lord Clive that his absence would be highly detrimental to the interests of Mysore, he at once declined the appointment. The correspondence to which this affair gave rise, exhibits Colonel Wellesley's disinterestedness and devotion to public duty in a most agreeable light. "Lord Mornington, in his letter to me," says he, "thinks the service is one from which I may derive some credit; but *I feel all that entirely out of the question*, and I leave to Lord Clive to decide according to his sense of the *public convenience*."

About this time letters arrived from the home Government, ordering that 3,000 men should be immediately dispatched to the Red Sea, to act against the French in Upper Egypt, and announcing that a force was about to

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be sent to the Mediterranean, under the command of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, for driving the French out of Lower Egypt. No sooner had Wellesley read these despatches, than, knowing that his force at Trincomalee was the only disposable force, without orders or instructions, which it was not possible to obtain in time, he proceeded to act on his own responsibility, and removed it from Ceylon to Bombay, where it would be some thousand miles nearer the Red Sea and Egypt. He seems fully to have expected to have had the command of this expedition; however, on arriving at Bombay, he found that his precautionary measure had met with the disapproval of the authorities, and that it had been conferred upon Sir David Baird. After exploding his vexation in a letter to his brother, he appears to have thought little more about it.

Towards the latter end of April, Colonel Wellesley reassumed his command in Mysore, and devoted himself, with the greatest assiduity, to the civil and military administration of that territory. He visited the several provinces; made himself thoroughly acquainted with their situation and wants; and applied himself vigorously, and with the happiest effect, to the reform of those abuses which had crept in during the latter part of the reign of Tippoo Saib.

An extensive gap occurs in Colonel Wellesley's correspondence at this period, which is wholly unaccounted for by Colonel Gurwood or any of his biographers. Foreseeing that a war with the Mahrattas was inevitable, he had employed himself in preparing an able and elaborate memorandum on the value of Seringapatam to the East India Company, proving, beyond a question, that the possession of that fortress, and its maintenance as a stronghold, were essential to the power and interests of the British in Mysore. He also drew up a memorandum upon operations in the Mahratta territory, in which he recommended, among other useful provisions, that military operations should commence when the rivers fill, which usually happens about July. When full, they interrupt the movements of the Mahratta troops, which are principally composed of cavalry; and, as most of these rivers are not fordable, and there is no means of passing them

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save in basket-boats, their fulness operates as an insuperable barrier. British troops, on the contrary, with good pontoons, can pass any river. Colonel Wellesley's second stay in Mysore lasted nearly two years. He was promoted to be Major-General on the 29th of April, 1802, soon after which he was destined to command in a new and eventful campaign against the Mahrattas.

Before we enter upon this portion of his history, however, we will present our readers with a sketch of his personal appearance at this time, as drawn by Major Moyle Sherer, one of the most gallant and devoted of his followers :—"General Wellesley was a little above the middle height, well limbed, and muscular, with little incumbrance of flesh beyond that which gives shape and manliness to the outline of the figure; with a firm tread; an erect carriage; a countenance strongly patrician, both in feature, profile, and expression; and an appearance remarkably distinguished: few could approach him on any duty, or on any subject requiring his serious attention, without being sensible of a something strange and penetrating in his clear light eye. Nothing could be more simple or straightforward than the matter of what he uttered; nor did he ever in his life affect any peculiarity of pomp of manner, or rise to any coarse, weak loudness in his tone of voice: it was not thus that he gave expression to excited feelings."

CHAPTER III

On the 12th of November, 1802, Major-General Wellesley received notice that an army would probably assemble at Toombuddra, and applied himself at once with the utmost vigour to the provisioning of that army. In a letter to Colonel Close, of January 1st, 1803, he sketched out a plan of operations for the campaign, having for their object the forcible restoration of the Peshwah.¹ This letter dwelt on the facilities afforded in Mysore for the victualling and equipment of the army, and the

¹ The Prime Minister and virtual ruler of the Mahratta empire. He had recently been defeated by Holkar.

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assistance he had derived from Purneah, the Prime Minister of that country.

Early in February Major-General Wellesley marched from Seringapatam for Hoonelly, where he was to await further orders. The Governor-General was averse to the advance of the whole army to Poonah, considering it a measure which involved unnecessary risk. It was, therefore, ordered that only a portion of that force should proceed into the Mahratta territories, and co-operate with those chiefs who were dependants of the Peshwah. General Wellesley joined General Stuart at Hurryhur, where he found a letter from Lord Clive, directing that the force to be detached from the main body should consist of not fewer than 7,000 men, and that it should be placed under the command of Major-General Wellesley. His instructions were to induce the southern chiefs to declare in favour of the Peshwah, and assist the advancing detachment in re-establishing his government; to form a junction with the Peshwah, or such of his troops as might be in the neighbourhood; to unite with Colonel Stevenson's force and the contingent of the Nizam, and proceed eventually to Poonah. Colonel Stevenson was under orders for the Mahratta territory, and the corps under Major-General Wellesley marched from Hurryhur on the 9th of March, and crossing the Toombuddra and Havanoor on the 12th, proceeded towards Poonah. Having received intelligence of the intention of Holkar to burn that city, the General pushed on with the cavalry, and performing a march of 60 miles in 30 hours, reached that town and saved it from destruction. Holkar's army retired without fighting; and on the 13th of May the Peshwah re-entered his capital.

Lord Lake had been appointed to the command of the Army of Hindostan, and his Lordship and Major-General Wellesley were invested with the fullest authority, military and political. After fruitless attempts at negotiation with Scindiah, General Wellesley marched from Poonah to the north, and took by escalade the town of Ahmednuggur, which was garrisoned by Scindiah's troops. On the 24th of August he crossed the Godavery river, and entered Aurungabad on the 29th. On the 12th

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of September the British General was encamped twenty miles north of the Godavery. Colonel Stevenson, with the Nizam's auxiliary force, was at some distance from him. Scindiah, who had a large mass of irregular cavalry, avoided a general engagement, being afraid of British discipline, and only thought of carrying on a predatory warfare; supporting his men at the expense of the subjects of the Nizam and other allies of the English, and wearing out the British troops by continual marches and piratical affrays.

About the middle of September General Wellesley learned that Scindiah had been reinforced by sixteen battalions of infantry, commanded by French officers, and a large train of artillery, and that the whole of his force was assembled near the banks of the Kaitna river. So soon as the enemy heard of the arrival of Major-General Wellesley at Aurungabad, they moved from Jalna to the southward and eastward, menacing a march on Hyderabad. The General, however, by taking the left bank of the Godavery, placed himself between them and that city, and effectually frustrated their design. Colonel Stevenson had attacked and carried that fort on the 2nd of September, and on the night of the 9th he had surprised a detachment, and caused them heavy loss. On the 21st Major-General Wellesley and Colonel Stevenson met and conferred at Budnapoor, where they arranged a combined attack on the enemy for the morning of the 24th. Stevenson was detached by the western route, the General taking the eastern; in order that, by this division of the force, they might be able to effect the passage of the defiles in one day, and by occupying both prevent their antagonists from escaping to the southward. The enemy having been reported to be at Bokardun, the General directed his march so as to encamp within twelve miles of that place, but when he halted he found that he was only six miles from it. He also learned that the cavalry of the Mahratta camp was already in motion to the rear, and that the infantry and guns were preparing to follow. Taking the 19th Dragoons and three regiments of the regular cavalry, he hastened on to reconnoitre, and soon came in sight of the enemy which had hitherto so carefully

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eluded him. But instead of infantry only, the whole combined army of Scindiah and the Rajah, numbering some 56,000 combatants, with 100 pieces of cannon, was in sight, strongly posted before the fortified village of Assye.

"The rising ground on which the General stood commanded a view of the entire encampment, which extended over a space of some miles between Bokardun and Assye; swarms of cavalry covered the plain before him, whilst to his right the infantry stretched to the village. Along the enemy's front flowed the seemingly impassable Kaitna between high and rugged banks. The whole of their vast train of artillery was with the infantry. The sight was enough to appal the stoutest heart. Thirty thousand horse in one magnificent mass, crowded the right; a dense array of infantry, powerfully supported by artillery, formed the centre and the left; the gunners were beside their pieces, and a hundred pieces of cannon in front of the line stood ready to vomit forth death upon the assailants. Wellesley paused for a moment, impressed but not daunted by the sight; his whole force, as Colonel Stevenson had not come up, did not exceed 8,000 men, of whom 1,600 were cavalry: the effective native British were not above 1,500; and he had only seventeen pieces of cannon." As the British cavalry came up, they formed in line on the heights, and presented a strange but glorious contrast to the multitude of Mahratta horsemen, who were seen in endless array below them. The English cavalry brigade, scarcely numbering 1,600 sabres, took its position with all the boldness of a body of ten times the force; for in number, Scindiah's cavalry was twenty to one.

The columns having arrived, Wellesley changed his original intention of attacking the enemy's right, and determined to fall upon his left, which was composed entirely of infantry. The ground on which these battalions were drawn up was a flat peninsula of inconsiderable size, formed by the union of the waters of the Kaitna with the Juah. The space was too confined to allow room for the Mahratta cavalry to manœuvre to much advantage, while the defeat of the corps of infantry was most likely to be effectual. Accordingly, a lateral movement was

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made to the left,—the march of the column being covered on the right flank by the Mysore horse, and in the rear protected by the British cavalry, under Colonel Maxwell. Having crossed the ford of Peepulgaon, which the enemy had neglected to defend, the British infantry were formed in two lines, supported by the cavalry, which were placed in line in reserve in the rear, on an open space between the Kaitna and a nullah that ran in a parallel direction with its stream. While deploying, the Mahratta guns kept up a furious cannonade; but, undisturbed by a fire that was ably directed and well sustained, the British dispositions for attack were coolly and promptly completed.

The order of battle being thus skilfully changed, the infantry of Scindiah was compelled to present a new front. They did so with greater ease than was expected. The line they now formed reached with its right to the Kaitna, and its left to the village of Assye, on the Juah. The front now presented by the enemy was one vast battery, especially towards the left, so numerous and weighty were the guns, and so thickly were they disposed immediately near the village. The fire was rapid, furious, and terrible in execution: the British guns, few in number, opened as the line advanced, but were almost on the instant silenced. Their gunners dropped fast, and the cattle fell killed or lacerated beside them. With the fierceness of the struggle, and the fearlessness of the hazard, the undaunted spirit of the General appeared to rise. He at once abandoned the guns, and directed an advance with the bayonet: with his main body he soon forced and drove the enemy's right, possessing himself of their guns by a resolute charge.

The pickets, with the 74th as a supporting regiment, were on the right of the two lines of infantry, and their attack was distinguished equally by the gallantry it exhibited, and the loss it produced. With unquestioned bravery, but bad judgment, the officer in command, when he might have covered his men in a great degree by a circuitous movement, pushed forward directly against the village of Assye, thus of necessity crossing "a space swept like a glacié by the cannon of the enemy." Overwhelmed by a murderous fire, the gallant band left half

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its number on the field. The men fell by dozens; and one company of those forming the pickets was almost annihilated. It went into action with an officer and fifty men; and in the evening four rank and file were all that survived that terrible day.

No wonder that the line under this tremendous fusillade from the village, supported by continuous showers of grape, was in many places fairly cut through, and that with difficulty it still maintained its ground. Perceiving its disorder, a cloud of Mahratta horsemen stole round the enclosures of Assye unperceived, and charged furiously into the ranks already half-destroyed. The moment was most critical. The Mussulman sabres were crossing the bayonets of the 74th, and "feeble and few, but fearless still," that gallant regiment was desperately resisting. Colonel Maxwell, who had watched the progress of the fight, saw that the moment for action had arrived. The word was given,—the British cavalry charged home. Down went the Mahrattas in hundreds, beneath the fiery assault of the brave 19th, and their gallant supporters, the sepoy; while, unchecked by a tremendous storm of grape and musketry, Maxwell pressed his advantage, and cut through Scindiah's left. The 74th and the light infantry rallied, re-formed, pushed boldly on, and, the second line coming forward to their support, completed the disorder of the enemy, and prevented any effective attempt to renew a battle, the doubtful result of which was thus in a few minutes decided by the promptitude of that well-directed charge.

Some of Scindiah's troops fought bravely. The desperate obstinacy with which his gunners stood to the cannon, seems almost incredible. They remained to the last, and were bayoneted around the guns which they refused, even in certain defeat, to abandon. The British charge was resistless; but in the enthusiasm of success, at times there is a lack of prudence. The sepoy pressed wildly on—their elated ardour was uncontrollable—while a mass of the Mahratta horse were arrayed on the hill, ready to rush upon ranks disordered by their own success. But General Wellesley had foreseen and guarded against the evil consequences a too excited courage might produce.

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The 78th were kept in hand; and supported by a regiment of native horse, they were now led forward by the General in person. The guns on the left were carried, and the village stormed with the bayonet. In this short but sanguinary attack, the 78th were highly distinguished. Their loss, from the severity of the enemy's fire, was severe, and General Wellesley himself had two horses killed under him.

A strong column of the enemy, that had been only partially engaged, now rallied and renewed the battle, joined by a number of Scindiah's gunners and infantry, who had flung themselves as if dead upon the ground, and thus escaped the sabres of the British cavalry. Maxwell's brigade, who had re-formed their line and breathed their horses, dashed into the still-disordered ranks of these half-rallied troops—a desperate slaughter ensued; the Mahrattas were totally routed, but the British cavalry lost their chivalrous leader; and in the moment of victory, Maxwell died in front of the battle, pressing on the pursuit of a mingled mob of all arms, who were flying in disorder from the field.

The rout was now complete. The sun at noon had shone on a proud array of fifty thousand men, drawn up in perfect order; it set upon a broken host, flying in dispersed bodies from a field on which the whole *matériel* of an army remained abandoned. Under more desperate circumstances a battle was never fought; and, opposed by overwhelming masses, a victory was never more completely won. Everything at noon was against the conquerors; numbers, position, all that could render victory almost a certain event, lay with the Mahratta chieftains. Small as the British force was, its energies were weakened by a long and exhausting march beneath a sultry sky; and nothing but indomitable courage could have sustained Wellesley's feeble battalions against the mighty masses to which they were opposed. Assye was indeed a glorious triumph: "It was a magnificent display of skill, moral courage, and perfect discipline, against native bravery and enormous physical superiority."

General Wellesley had for some time expressed an anxious wish to retire from his command in the Mysore.

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While the war with Holkar was being carried on, by a skilful distribution of the army of the Deccan, the Mahratta chiefs, whose loyalty was very questionable, were completely overawed; and with every inclination to be troublesome, they were necessitated to remain pacific. General Wellesley had many causes of complaint—he was disliked by the Peshwah—his measures were sometimes rendered inoperative by restrictions of the government—and occasional notices in his despatches show that he felt these annoyances.

When it was officially announced that General Wellesley had determined to return to England, addresses to him were voted by numerous public bodies, and testimonials of various kinds were presented to him. On the 6th of March a grand entertainment was given to him by the civil and military officers of the Presidency of Madras, and on the 10th he embarked for England on board the *Trident* man-of-war, having notified, in a general order to the troops, his resignation of the command in the Deccan, and his immediate departure from India.

A monument in commemoration of the battle of Assye was erected at Calcutta. The inhabitants of that city presented General Wellesley with a sword of the value of a thousand guineas; and his own officers testified their attachment and admiration by the gift of a service of plate. In England, the thanks of Parliament were voted to him, and he was made a Knight Companion of the Bath. Of all the honours paid him, however, none gratified him more than the parting address of the people of Seringapatam, who fully appreciated the blessings of his government.

CHAPTER IV

SOON after his arrival in England, in September, 1805, Major-General Wellesley was appointed to the command of a brigade in the expedition under Lord Cathcart, destined for continental service, and which sailed on the 4th of November under the temporary orders of General Don. Lord Cathcart assumed the command on the 17th, but the

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disastrous consequences which resulted from the reverses sustained by the Austro-Russian army at Austerlitz, rendered it advisable to abandon the attempt, and, the troops were accordingly recalled to England. On the return of the expedition from Hanover, Major-General Wellesley was appointed to command the troops stationed at Hastings in Sussex,—an humble duty compared to those which he had recently performed, but one to which he devoted himself with his accustomed zeal and assiduity. The Marquess Cornwallis, who succeeded Lord Mornington in the government of India, held it but a short time, dying on the 5th of October, 1805, at Ghazypoor, near Benares. By his demise, the colonelcy of the 33rd regiment became vacant, and Major-General Wellesley succeeded the Marquess, 30th of January, having been lieutenant-colonel of that corps for nearly thirteen years. Shortly before he obtained his regiment, the major-general was returned to Parliament for the borough of Rye. On the 10th of April, 1806, he married the Honourable Catherine Pakenham, third daughter of Edward Michael, second Earl of Longford. Two sons were the issue of this marriage,—Arthur, Marquess of Douro, born the 3rd of February, 1807, in Harley-street, London; and Charles, born at the Chief Secretary's lodge, near Dublin, 16th of January, 1808. Both entered the army at an early age.

The experience of Sir Arthur Wellesley in Indian affairs rendered him a useful and efficient member of the House of Commons. One of his first duties in that capacity was to defend his illustrious brother, the Earl of Mornington, who had been most violently attacked by a crack-brained legislator of the name of Paull, the son of a tailor at Perth, who found abettors in Mr. Fox and several leading Whigs of the time, and brought forward a number of unfounded and wholly unsupported charges against the noble Earl; so palpably absurd and ridiculous as to be beneath contempt. Sir Arthur Wellesley, having reminded the House “how often the noble Earl had been thanked by that Assembly, and by the Court of Directors, for the very measures that were now impugned,” might safely have left the imputations without further notice, but the

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pertinacity of Paull, supported as he was by the more influential members of the Whig party, provoked him to enter upon a defence of his noble relative; in the course of which, among other striking facts, he mentioned that Lord Mornington had increased the revenue of the East India Company nearly seven millions! The foolish charges of Paull and his confederates received their quietus by a vote of thanks to the Earl, which was carried by a majority of 151; not, however, until the House had gone through the farce of examining several witnesses, all of whom deposed in the teeth of the accusations of Mr. Paull and his instigators. The leading supporters of the quondam tailor and his sponsors were Lord A. Hamilton, Lord Folkestone, and Sir T. Turton, of one of whom the world has since heard matters which have redounded but little to his credit. On the dissolution of Parliament, Sir Arthur Wellesley was returned for the borough of St. Michaels; and on the formation of the Portland Administration in 1807, was appointed, under the Duke of Richmond, to be Chief Secretary for Ireland.

In the summer of this year Sir Arthur Wellesley once more embarked on foreign service, in an expedition under the command of Lord Cathcart, destined to Copenhagen, the object of which was the seizure of the Danish fleet, to prevent it from falling, as it would otherwise inevitably have done, into the hands of Napoleon Buonaparte. On the 29th of August, Sir Arthur Wellesley's division attacked the Danish troops at Kioge, carried their works, entered the town, and captured nearly 1500 prisoners. The bombardment of Copenhagen brought the Danish Government to terms; and General Wellesley, Lieutenant-Colonel Murray, and Sir Home Popham (captain of the fleet), were appointed by Lord Cathcart to draw up the articles of capitulation, which were agreed to on the 7th of September. In accordance with these articles, the Danish fleet was delivered up to the British Government, to be kept in pledge until the conclusion of a general peace. By this capitulation, sixteen line-of-battle ships, fifteen frigates, five brigs, and twenty-five gun-boats, besides several vessels on the stocks, and a prodigious quantity of naval stores, were delivered up to our fleet; and on the

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20th of October, the troops being all re-embarked, the expedition returned to England.

The perfidious and aggressive conduct of Napoleon Buonaparte opened, at this juncture, another field for the display of the valour and genius of the Great Captain of our age. Having demanded, by virtue of his alliance with Spain, a contingent of troops to aid him in the north, and having thus withdrawn the flower of the Spanish army under Romana, he sent the greater part of it to Denmark. His next measure was the secret treaty with Charles IV., for partitioning Portugal : one third was to form a principedom for Godoy ; a third for the Queen of Etruria ; whilst Lisbon and the lion's portion were to be selected for himself. Whilst planning this treachery, he was negotiating with the imbecile Prince of Brazil, for the renunciation of the British alliance, the seizure of British property, the imprisonment of British residents, and the adoption of the continental system.

A considerable force had been collected at Cork in the spring of 1808, the destination of which had given rise to much speculation.

On the 25th of April, 1808, Sir Arthur Wellesley was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-General ; on the 14th of June ensuing, he was appointed by the Duke of York, then at the Horse Guards, to command this detachment of the army on a particular service ; and on the 30th of the same month, the objects it was designed to accomplish were specifically detailed to the Lieutenant-General in a letter from Lord Castlereagh ; namely, to assist the people and armies of the Peninsula in repelling the perfidious and most unprincipled aggression of Buonaparte.

General Wellesley arrived at Cork, and assumed the command of this armament on the 6th of July. Two more battalions had been added to its strength ; but the state of the wind, and the non-arrival of the dragoons, caused some delay. It sailed from Cove on the 12th of July ; and the *Crocodile* frigate, in which Sir Arthur was embarked, having quitted the fleet as soon as it cleared the coast of Ireland, reached Corunna on the 20th.

The difficulties by which Sir Arthur Wellesley was surrounded were unusually great. He could gain no informa-

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tion on which he could really rely respecting the actual state of the countries he was called upon to succour. He could place but little faith in the exaggerated statements of the Spanish patriots. He could not even ascertain on what amount of co-operation he might positively calculate; whilst of the strength of the opposing force he could learn nothing whatever. Even the appointment of Sir Arthur to the command was only provisional. He was to surrender it to Sir Harry Burrard, who was in his turn to succumb to Sir Hew Dalrymple; and in the form which the expedition afterwards assumed, no fewer than six general officers were placed over his head into whose hands the conduct of the war might eventually have fallen.

The appointment of Sir Hew Dalrymple to the command of the expedition, and the sailing of the armament under Sir John Moore, reached Sir Arthur Wellesley off the Mondego. This mortifying intelligence led him to make an immediate descent on the coast, and with the handful of troops at his command, to commence operations. With only 9000 men he threw himself into a country occupied by a well-disciplined French army mustering more than double his numbers. But with this small force did he lay the foundation of his future glory.

The troops began to disembark on the 2nd of August, when Sir Arthur immediately placed himself in communication with the civil and military authorities of the country. Having established his head-quarters, on the 2nd, at Lavaos, Sir Arthur issued a proclamation to the Portuguese people, explaining the objects for which he had been sent to their assistance. The disembarkation, owing to the roughness of the water, was difficult; and it was not until the 5th that the whole of the men and stores were safely landed. General Spencer had disembarked his force at Puerto de Santa Maria the instant he heard of the surrender of Dupont; and thus, on the 8th, Sir Arthur found himself at the head of a body of men of sufficient strength to warrant him in undertaking a forward movement. Although, however, the disembarkation was effected without molestation from the enemy, his operations were retarded by the want of an adequate commissariat and proper means of transport. The

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united forces of the two divisions amounted to 12,300 men. Having furnished the Portuguese General Freire with 5000 stands of arms and the necessary ammunition for his troops, Sir Arthur moved from his ground on the 9th, and was followed on the 10th by the main body of his army. Having arrived at Leiria on the 10th, he caused a magazine of provisions, which had been collected for the British, to be handed over to Freire. His first movement had interrupted the line of communication between Loison and Laborde, who was marching from Lisbon with a view to unite with him at Leiria, and who was now driven to circuitous and forced marches. To oppose the British force, Loison had some 7000, Laborde 5000, and Junot 10,000. Loison was on the left of the British route, and Laborde in front. Where these armies intended to unite could not be ascertained. Sir Arthur, with his accustomed good luck, had so interposed himself between them as to be enabled to take them in detail. On the 15th, Junot quitted Lisbon, and on the 17th, pushing on in person, and leaving his troops to follow, joined Loison at Alcoentre. On the 15th, a French post at Bulos was attacked, and their pickets driven out of Obidos. The riflemen of the 95th and 60th had the honour of the first encounter, and were so eager in pursuit as to be well nigh cut off. Two officers and twenty-seven men were killed or wounded in this skirmish. The next day Sir Arthur surveyed the strong position of Laborde, which was drawn up on the table-land before Rolica, a village situated at the head of the valley, from which rises the hill of Obidos. The favourable points upon the hills on either side and in the valley below were occupied by his posts. Behind him, a mile to the rear, the steep and difficult ridge of Zambugeira offered a second position. The valley leading from the old Moorish fort of Obidos to the romantic village of Rolica, is walled on the left by rude heights rising above each other till they are finally lost in the dark summits of the Sierra de Baragueda.

Never was a sweeter spot chosen for the scene of a murderous combat than that which the village of Rolica, and its surrounding landscape, presented at sunrise on the 17th of August. The place, with its adjacent hamlets,

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contained, it was computed, a population of nearly 300 families. The houses were neat and commodious, each surrounded by an inclosed garden, stocked with vines; while the country about the villages, studded thickly with olive grounds, ilex groves, and cork woods, exhibited all that rustic comfort which marks a contented and industrious peasantry. Upon a table-land immediately in front of Rolica, and overlooking the country for many miles, the French were strongly posted. Laborde had seized every advantage a position of immense strength naturally presented—while the Sierra afforded a succession of posts on which he might easily fall back. To preserve his communication with Loison, and to avoid exposing the line of Torres Vedras and Mafra, Laborde was compelled to await the attack of the British troops. His force was under 6000, but his position was a very strong one, and besides five pieces of cannon, he had with him 500 cavalry.

The English army broke up from Caldas at daybreak on the 17th of August, and forming three columns, advanced against the enemy's position. The right column, consisting of 1200 infantry and 50 cavalry of the Portuguese corps left under Sir Arthur's orders by General Freire, was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Trant, who received directions to turn the enemy's left and penetrate into the mountains in the rear. The left column, commanded by Major-General Ferguson, and composed of a brigade of infantry, three companies of riflemen, and a few dragoons, was ordered to ascend the mountain ridge on the eastern side of the valley, and turn the right of the French position. This division was also directed to keep a look-out on its left for Loison's corps. The centre column, consisting of four brigades of British infantry and 400 Portuguese light infantry, the remainder of the cavalry and two brigades of artillery, was destined to attack the position of the enemy in front. The moral effect of the battle of Rolica was of immense importance. It was the dawning of a glorious day; and its results were admirably calculated to confirm the wavering faith of doubtful allies, and remove the conviction of the French regarding their military superiority. It was a noble compliment paid

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by Napoleon to British infantry, when he observed, "that they never knew when they were beaten;" and it was the happiest delusion under which a soldier ever laboured—that of fancying himself unconquerable. That belief had been artfully cherished by Napoleon; and to its prevalence among his soldiers half his victories may be ascribed. But the battle of Rolica at once dispelled the dream; and the French discovered in the island-soldiers to whom they were opposed, men in everything their equals—and in unflinching gallantry infinitely their superiors. While Rolica displayed the fine properties of British soldiers to their enemies, it was not its least advantage that it also confirmed the confidence of their leader in the troops on which he depended for success. If the sharp affair at Obidos proved the gallantry, the advance upon Rolica displayed the high discipline of Wellesley's little army. The following graphic sketch happily describes the opening movements on the 17th:

"As the distance between Caldas and Rolica falls not short of three leagues, the morning was considerably advanced before the troops arrived within musket-shot of the French outposts. Nothing could exceed the orderly and gallant style in which they traversed the intervening space. The day chanced to be remarkably fine, and the scenery through which the columns passed was varied and striking; but they were by far the most striking feature in the whole panorama. Whenever any broken piece of ground, or other natural obstacle, came in the way, the head of the column, having passed it, would pause till the rear had recovered its order and resumed its station; and then the whole would press forward, with the same attention to distances, and the same orderly silence, which are usually preserved at a review. At last, however, the enemy's line became visible, and in a few minutes afterwards the skirmishers were engaged. The centre division now broke into columns of battalions; that on the left pressed on with a quick pace, whilst the riflemen on the right drove in, with great gallantry, and in rapid style, the tirailleurs opposed to them."

Laborde's first position soon became untenable; his rear was endangered; and, without a moment's indecision,

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he fell farther back, and occupied the mountain passes. Nothing could be stronger than this second position. "The way by which the assailants had to ascend was up ravines, rather than paths, more practicable for goats than men; so steep, that in many parts a slip of the foot would have been fatal; in some parts overgrown with briars, and in others impeded by fragments of rock." Of these the centre was the most practicable; and the 29th and 9th regiments advanced to storm it, protected by the fire of the British guns; while a cloud of skirmishers vanished among rocks and copse-wood, connecting the advance of the different columns, and feeling or forcing their way through obstacles that a vigorous defence had rendered almost insurmountable. Gradually, the scene became more animated, as on each of the several points of attack the assailants and the assailed became warmly engaged. The spattering fusillade of the light troops was lost in the rolling volleys of the columns, which, with the deeper boom of cannon, echoed loudly through the mountains. The hollow watercourses, behind which the British had attacked, hid for a time the combatants from view: but the smoke, wreathing over the ravines, showed by its density the place where the work of death went fastest on.

On the left, Laborde gradually lost ground; but on the right his exertions were redoubled, in the desperate hope that Loison might yet come up, and thus retrieve the fortune of the day. Here, of course, the struggle became bloodiest. While the flank movements of Trant and Ferguson had not yet proved themselves successful, the 9th and 29th regiments forced their respective passes, and gained the plateau of the hill. They reached the summit out of breath, their ranks disordered, and their formation requiring a few minutes to correct. At that moment a fine battalion of Laborde's came boldly forward, delivered a shattering volley, and broke through the centre of the British regiment. But the 29th were broken, not beaten; and the 9th came to their assistance. The officers discharged their duties nobly, and the men fought, and formed, and held their ground with desperate obstinacy until Ferguson won the right flank of the position; when, aware that the chance of support was hopeless, Laborde

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retreated in excellent order, covering the retrogressive movement of his battalions by repeated charges of his cavalry.

His last stand was made at Zambugeira. The British having now arrived in force, rendered opposition unavailing, and falling back on the Quinta de Bugagliera, he united his beaten corps with the troops he had detached to look after Loison at Segura; thence, abandoning his guns, he marched by the pass of Runa, and gained Montachique by a severe night-march, leaving the line of Torres Vedras uncovered, and, consequently, Lisbon open to the advance of the British army.

The casualties on both sides, considering the small number actually engaged, marks Rolicca as one of the most sanguinary conflicts which has occurred in modern warfare. The actual combatants did not exceed 5000 men; and the French loss, on a low estimate, amounted to 700, and the British to nearly 500, in killed, wounded, and missing. Laborde was wounded early in the action, but refused to leave the field; and the British loss included two Lieutenant-Colonels.

The firing ceased a little after four, when Sir Arthur, hearing that Loison's division was at Bimbural, only five miles distant, took up a position for the night in an oblique line to that which he had just forced. His left rested upon a height near the field of battle; his right covered the road to Lourinham. Before night he learned that Anstruther's and Acland's divisions, accompanied by a large fleet of store-ships, were off the coast. He had resolved to march next morning to Torres Vedras, but this news induced him to alter his plans, and seek some convenient spot, which would enable him to cover the landing of these reinforcements.

"This day's work," says Major Moyle Sherer, "should be long and honourably remembered by every British soldier; for it was the first action of the memorable war in the Peninsula in which British forces encountered the legions of Buonaparte."

On the evening of the 19th, Sir Arthur took up a position beside the village of Vimieiro, having detached a brigade to cover the march of General Anstruther's reinforcement,

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which, after immense difficulty, had been landed in the Bay of Maceira, and that too in the face of a very superior cavalry force, which overspread the country around the position, and increased the danger of disembarking. Another brigade, under General Acland, arrived on the 20th, and landed the same night, increasing Sir Arthur Wellesley's force to 16,000 men and 18 pieces of artillery.

Vimieiro, a pretty village in a lovely and peaceful valley, through which the river Maceira gently flows, was the principal post in the British lines, and was occupied by the park, the commissariat, and that noisy crowd of animals and followers which marks the presence of an army. It stands on the eastern extremity of some mountain heights, which screen it from the sea; and westward, separated from them by a deep ravine, lie other heights. Over these last, the road passes to Lourinham. The cavalry and Portuguese lay behind the village upon the plateau of a steep insulated height; the brigades of Anstruther and Fane, with six guns, were immediately in front of Vimieiro. The right of the latter rested upon one extremity of this hill, just above the river Maceira; and the left of Anstruther occupied a church and churchyard at the other. Here passed a road leading to the village. On the mountain, to the right and rear of this plateau, and which, at long range, commanded it, were placed eight guns and five brigades of infantry. The cavalry and reserve of artillery were in the valley, between the hills on which the infantry stood, both flanking and supporting Brigadier Fane's advanced guard.

The enemy first appeared about eight in the morning, in large bodies of cavalry, on our left, on the road to Lourinham, but it was soon obvious that the attack would begin upon our advanced guard. Major-General Ferguson's brigade was immediately moved across the ravine to the heights, with three pieces of cannon. He was followed successively by Brigadier-General Nightingall, with his brigade, and three pieces of cannon, and Brigadier-General Bowes, with his brigade. Their troops were formed on these heights, with their right upon the valley which leads into Vimieiro, and their left upon the other ravine which terminates at the landing-place at Maceira.

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The Portuguese troops, which were posted in the first instance in the bottom, near Vimieiro, were formed on the last-mentioned heights.

The troops of the advanced guards, on the heights to the southward and eastward of the town, were deemed sufficient for its defence; and Major-General Hill was moved to the centre of the mountain, on which the great body of the infantry had been posted, as a support to these troops, and as a reserve to the whole army; in addition to this support, they had that of the cavalry in the rear of their right.

The enemy's attack began in several columns upon the whole of the troops on this height; on the left, they advanced, notwithstanding the fire of the riflemen, close to the 50th regiment, and were checked and driven back only by the bayonets of that corps. The second battalion, 43rd regiment, was likewise closely engaged with them in the road which leads into Vimieiro, a part of that corps having been ordered into the churchyard, to prevent them from penetrating into the town. On the right of the position, they were repulsed by the bayonets of the 97th regiment, which corps was successfully supported by the second battalion of the 52nd, which, by an advance in column, took the enemy in flank.

Besides this opposition given to the attack of the enemy on the advanced guard by their own exertions, they were attacked in flank by Brigadier-General Acland's brigade, in its advance to its position on the heights on the left; and a cannonade was kept up on the flank of the enemy's columns by the artillery on those heights. At length, after a most desperate contest, the enemy was driven back in confusion, with the loss of seven pieces of cannon, many prisoners, 36 officers and 594 men killed and wounded. They were pursued by a detachment of the 20th Light Dragoons, but their cavalry were so much superior in numbers that this detachment suffered much, and Lieutenant-Colonel Taylor was unfortunately killed.

Nearly at the same time the enemy's attack commenced upon the heights on the road to Lourinham; this movement was supported by a large body of cavalry, and was made with the usual impetuosity of French troops. It

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was received with steadiness by Major-General Ferguson's brigade, consisting of the 36th, 40th, and 71st regiments, and these corps charged as soon as the enemy approached them, who gave way, and they continued to advance upon him, supported by the 82nd, one of the corps of Brigadier-General Nightingall's brigade (which, as the ground extended, afterwards formed a part of the first line), by the 29th regiment, and by Brigadier-General Bowes' and Acland's brigades; whilst Brigadier-General Crauford's brigade and the Portuguese troops, in two lines, advanced along the height on the left. In the advance of Major-General Ferguson's brigade, six pieces of cannon were taken from the enemy, with many prisoners, and vast numbers were killed and wounded. The enemy afterwards made an attempt to recover part of his artillery by attacking the 71st and 82nd regiments, which were halted in a valley in which it had been captured. These regiments retired from the low grounds in the valley to the heights, where they halted, faced about, fired, and advanced upon the enemy, who had by that time arrived in the low ground, and they thus obliged him again to retire with great loss.

In this action, in which the whole of the French force in Portugal was employed, under the command of the Duke d'Abrantes in person; in which the enemy was certainly superior in cavalry and artillery, and in which not more than half of the British arms was actually engaged, they sustained a signal defeat; and lost thirteen pieces of cannon, twenty-three ammunition waggons, with powder, shells, and stores of all descriptions. One general officer (Brennier) was among the prisoners. The loss of the British army was 720 killed and wounded.

CHAPTER V

THE British army, though mustering with the Portuguese force 19,000 men, comprised but 470 cavalry, of which only 210 were English. Had two of the regiments then idle in barrack-yards at home been at hand, the march to Torres Vedras would have been made, and Lisbon

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have been our own. It was only noonday when the affair, which began at 10 A.M., was decided. The 4th and 8th British brigades had suffered very little; the Portuguese, the 5th and the 1st British brigades, had not fired a shot. A striking opportunity occurred of annihilating Junot; but unhappily, the senior officer of the division, Sir Harry Burrard, had landed, and although he abstained from interfering in the battle, he would not permit Sir Arthur Wellesley to avail himself of the golden opportunity that was opened to him by an oversight of the enemy.

The rugged character of the country on the enemy's left compelled them, pressed as they were, to retreat by a more circuitous road, along the level and open ground on the summit of the ridge. Now as this ridge meets the chain of hills that stretches between Lourinham and Torres Vedras at a right angle, the enemy's right could only rejoin the rest of their army by making a very considerable detour. Sir Arthur, perceiving at a glance the critical situation in which they had placed themselves, would fain have cut them off by pushing forward the right wing of the British army to that place, and seizing upon the defile through which they must necessarily retreat to Lisbon. Sir Harry Burrard would listen to no such suggestion; but, with the characteristic caution of age, expressed his belief that the English army was not strong enough for the enterprise. "So," said Sir Arthur to his officers, "you may go and shoot red-legged partridges instead of men."

Nor was this all. The foolish old man insisted upon the whole army waiting at Vinheiro for the arrival of Sir John Moore, and thus lost the opportunity of reaching Lisbon before Junot, and striking the first blow, which, according to the old proverb, is half the battle. In a letter to the Duke of York, Sir Arthur says: "I think if General Hill's brigade and the advanced guard had moved forward, the enemy would have been cut off from Torres Vedras, and we should have been at Lisbon before him; if, indeed, any French army had continued to remain in Portugal." On the very day after the battle, Sir Hew Dalrymple, arriving in a frigate from Gibraltar, superseded

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Sir H. Burrard, as Sir Harry had superseded Sir Arthur. The time for following up the advantage had gone by. He, however, exhibited little more delicacy or discretion than Sir Harry Burrard. Matters turned out precisely as Sir Arthur Wellesley had predicted. Junot, after withdrawing his beaten corps, called a council of war to consider the course he should pursue. Aware that Lisbon was not secure from insurrection for an hour; without ammunition or provisions; and discouraged by a signal defeat; the position of the French army was perilous in the extreme. To force their way over the frontier was a hazardous experiment; and the decision of Junot's generals was unanimous that negotiation should be resorted to. Kellerman was accordingly dispatched to the British camp; and, as the result proved, an abler diplomatist could not have been selected. Had Wellesley been allowed to follow up his successes, not a reasonable doubt exists but Lisbon must have fallen; but Sir Harry Burrard's unhappy interference robbed his victory of its value; Junot had ample time to repair his disaster; there were many excellent positions between Vimieiro and the capital; and Elvas and Almeida were open to receive him, should he cross the Tagus. The equinox was at hand, and an army dependent on a fleet for its supplies had everything to dread while landings were to be made on such a rock-bound coast as that of Portugal. The tide of fortune had been suffered to ebb; the fatal error of Sir Harry Burrard was not to be recovered; and Sir Hew Dalrymple consented to a compromise which the incapacity of his predecessor had now rendered advisable.

On assuming command, and ascertaining the state of the British army, Sir Hew Dalrymple saw too late the error of Sir Harry Burrard; and having determined to advance, orders to that effect were issued. What results might have arisen from even this tardy step in the right direction, it is impossible to say; for Kellerman conducted his mission so skilfully that he obtained the sanction of Sir Hew to an armistice preparatory to a convention for the evacuation of Portugal by the French. The terms were arranged between Kellerman and Sir Hew.

The unpopularity of the Convention was such, that the

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Government instituted a court of inquiry, and recalled Sir Harry Burrard, Sir Hew Dalrymple, and Sir Arthur Wellesley, in order that they might be examined by the board. The Court sat in the month of November; and, after a tedious inquiry, reported that the Convention of Cintra had been of great advantage to Portugal, to the army and navy, and the general service; and that no further military proceeding was necessary on the subject—clinching their opinion by a compliment to its authors!

No direction having been given to him to return to the Peninsula, Sir Arthur resumed his post of Chief Secretary for Ireland; and Parliament having re-assembled in January, 1809, he once more took his seat in the House of Commons; a few days after which (on the 27th) he received the thanks of Parliament for his distinguished services at Vimieiro. A similar resolution passed in the House of Lords about the same time.

During the absence of Sir Arthur Wellesley in England, Sir Harry Burrard, who had succeeded Sir Hew Dalrymple, resigned his command after holding it only a few days, on the plea of ill health. His successor, Sir John Moore, was the general, of all others after Wellesley, whom his countrymen delighted to honour. It was on the 6th of October that Sir John received the order of the English ministers to enter Spain. An army of 35,000 men was promised him, of which 25,000 were to be taken from the troops already in Portugal, and 10,000 were to be sent to the coast of Galicia direct. Within twenty days of the receipt of his instructions the columns were on the march, and the head-quarters had quitted Lisbon. With the main body of his army he marched to Salamanca by Almeida. His first mistake was sending, on some vague rumour that the Almeida route was not practicable for artillery, his guns, cavalry, and a small column of infantry under Sir John Hope, by the valley of the Tagus, when they might have marched much more conveniently by the ordinary road. Sir John entered Salamanca on the 13th of November. Sir David Baird, with 10,000 men, was on his way from Corunna to join him, and Sir John Hope was pursuing his circuitous route with the same object:

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the successive divisions of his corps were not concentrated until the 23rd. It was a splendid army, in a high state of health and efficiency; of a discipline not to be surpassed, and burning with heroic ardour to engage the foe. Sir John Moore had been left very much to his own resources for information, and to his own discretion for a plan of operations, and found himself disappointed and discouraged on all hands. The armies (of Blake and Belvedere) he had come to support had been already annihilated, and the people, instead of being enthusiastic in their own cause, and full of energy, were to the last degree spiritless, depressed and impoverished. He found, indeed, many discouragements which had been repeatedly encountered and overcome by Sir Arthur Wellesley, without possessing his power of controlling them. Thanks to the government at home, he was without magazines, or money in the military chest to form them.

The force under Moore's command was sufficiently strong to have ensured a successful issue to the operation originally intended. It was also in hand; and to plan and to execute were, consequently, within the power of the English general. His infantry were concentrated at Mayorga, the cavalry at Melgar Abaxo—the entire strength amounting (including 2278 cavalry) to 23,600 men, with 60 pieces of cannon. The whole was organized in three divisions—a reserve, and two light brigades of infantry—and one division of cavalry. The guns were divided into seven brigades, of which four batteries were attached to the infantry, two to the cavalry, and one was held in reserve. Soult's corps, of 16,000 infantry and 1200 horse lay upon the Carrion. Of these 12,000 could be assembled to oppose the British. He marched forward, alas, too late for any practicable purpose. Having halted on the 22nd and 23rd for supplies, he determined to proceed during the night and attack the French force at Saldana in the morning. Already were his troops on their way to the Carrion when intelligence was brought him which converted his advance into a retreat. Napoleon had heard of Moore's movement, and had 50,000 men under his orders at the foot of Guadarama pass. The French troops at Talavera were also in full march to act upon the English

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army. An expeditious retreat therefore had now become inevitable; and it was only by twelve hours that Sir John Moore saved the passage of the Elsa, where Napoleon in person had expected to intercept him. Never were hours of deeper importance to an army. Napoleon, night and day, was urging his troops forward. On the 24th he reached Villacastia, and on the 26th he arrived at Tordesillas. Bent on the destruction of the English, "his resolution, and its execution, was like lightning; the flash was no sooner visible than the thunder rolled; the influence of his mighty genius was instantaneously felt; no delay was permitted to take place; the troops marched incessantly; and their great leader rushed on to retrieve the errors of his lieutenants."

The retreat of Sir John Moore was continued. Lord Paget, just as he marched through Mayorga with the rear-guard, discovered the advanced horsemen of Marshal Ney's corps, close behind him, a body of which soon attempted to act on his line, but were driven off with the loss of 100 prisoners. Sir John Moore halted his army for two days at Benevente, to clear out his stores, after which he continued his retreat upon Astorga. For the greater part of his stores he could procure no transport, and they were destroyed. Baird's division had passed on the 26th by the fords and ferry of Valencia; and Hope, with the light brigades and reserve, crossed by the bridge of Castro Gonzalo, the defence of the bridge at Mansilla having been entrusted to the Spaniards, under Romana.

The cavalry, however, were not suffered to retire so easily as the columns. As the rear-guard were clearing Mayorga, Ney's videts were discovered by Lord Paget, and a strong body of French horsemen immediately displayed themselves, drawn up on a high ground that flanked the line of the English retreat. Colonel Leigh, with two squadrons of the 10th Hussars, was immediately directed to dislodge them. The order was gallantly obeyed. The soil was heavy, the ground saturated with rain; and when, under a smart fire, the English cavalry had gained in two lines the summit of the height, the exertion was so violent that it was found necessary to rein-up, and allow the horses to get fresh wind. The halt

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was but momentary; and the word to charge was given. The attack was vigorously made; the enemy overthrown and driven from the heights, leaving on the ground a number of men dead or dismounted; while upwards of one hundred prisoners were carried off by the English dragoons. Lord Paget continued his retrogressive march to Benevente. Romana, leaving 3000 men and two guns to defend the bridge at Mansilla, fell back with the remainder of his corps to Leon; while Soult took the Mansilla road, directing his march upon Astorga, with which place, by the promptness of his movements, Sir John Moore had restored the communications which the rapidity of Napoleon's march had endangered.

On entering Astorga, Romana's troops, which were in full retreat from Mansilla and Leon, crossed them on their road, and created almost inextricable confusion. His army had in no respect the advantage of Sir John's. The soldiers under arms little exceeded in number the sick borne in cars and on mules; and as they passed along, emaciated and enfeebled by disease, the procession had much more of the appearance of an ambulatory hospital in need of an escort, than of an army to defend the country.

From Astorga to Lugo the English line of march was a scene of great suffering and disorder. Its discipline before the commencement of this retreat had been perfect; the men were steady, clean, and obedient; robust, hardy, and brave. Discipline had now vanished; their attachment to their general was gone; they disobeyed him, and treated their officers with insolence. The length of the marches, the severity of the weather, and the wretched state of the roads—here mud, there snow—the want of supplies, and the desponding sense of shame associated with a retreat,—all combined to disorganize them.

It is painful, even at this remote period, to look back upon that ruinous retreat,¹ and observe the calamitous consequences a mere "diversion," without any action beyond some cavalry collisions, had so immediately pro-

¹ Modern writers agree that the retreat to Corunna, by keeping a large force of the enemy engaged, was really a most useful operation.

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duced. On the 25th, the rear-guard retired from Sahagun unmolested, and in the highest discipline; and in one week, an eye-witness, after describing the condition of the army as "most melancholy," thus continues his fearful narrative:—"The rain came down upon us in torrents; men and horses were foundering at every step; the former fairly worn out through fatigue and want of nutriment, the latter sinking under their loads, and dying upon the spot. Nor was it only among the baggage animals that an absolute inability to proceed further began to show itself; the shoes of the cavalry horses dropped off and the horses themselves soon became useless. It was a sad spectacle to behold these fine creatures urged and goaded on till their strength utterly failed them, and then shot to death by their riders, in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. Then, again, the few ammunition waggons which had hitherto kept up, fell one by one to the rear; the ammunition was immediately destroyed, and the waggons abandoned. Thus were misfortunes accumulating upon us as we proceeded; and it appeared extremely improbable, should our present system of forced marches be persisted in, that one-half of the army would ever reach the coast."

The retreat to Lugo was marked by every casualty and annoyance to which an army in imminent danger could be exposed. It was one continued skirmish between the French advanced and British rear-guards; while the troops became hourly more unfit for service, and their resources diminished every mile. On the road an immense supply of arms and clothing, intended for the use of Romana's army, was met. The soldiers were permitted to take any necessities they pleased, and the rest was wasted or abandoned. Waggons filled with sick and wounded men blocked the way, and, from a sad necessity, some were committed to the mercy of the enemy; several guns, whose horses had foundered, were spiked and left behind; until, at last, it was determined that the money intended for the immediate demands of the army should not be carried further, and Sir John Moore directed that two bullock-carts, loaded with 100,000 Spanish dollars, should be destroyed by rolling the casks which contained the specie

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into a deep ravine. The order was unnecessarily but strictly carried into execution : " the rear-guard halted : and Lieutenant Bennet, of the light company of the 28th regiment, was placed over the money, with strict orders from Sir John Moore to shoot the first person who attempted to touch it. It was then rolled down the precipice ; the casks were soon broken by the rugged rocks, and the dollars falling out, rolled over the height a sparkling cascade of silver. The French advanced guard coming up shortly afterwards to the spot, were detained for a time picking up a few dollars that had been scattered on the road.

It appears a very strange circumstance, and one difficult to justify, that the English general had not decided upon the place from which he should embark his army, until his rear-guard had reached Herrierias, on the morning of the 5th ; and then Corunna was selected, it being nearer than Vigo by two marches, and affording a tolerable position, on which a hard-pressed army might abide an action.

If anything could have convinced Sir John Moore of the folly of this miserable retreat, it would have been the almost magical transformation of his soldiers when they heard, at length, that they were to be allowed to give battle to the enemy. As if by the touch of an enchanter's wand, the organization of the disorderly battalions was again complete. The news sobered them at once. Not even the example of summary executions had hitherto availed to check their ruinous insubordination ; but when it became known that the colours of their respective regiments were planted in bivouacs on a line of battle, to the joy and pride of their officers, the men hurried to the ranks ; and as they examined their firelocks, fixed their flints, and loosened from their scabbards the bayonets which the pouring rain had rusted in their sheaths, they again looked to their officers with the regard of a ready obedience and a brave devotion.

" Arrangements were instantly made to receive the attack, which seemed now to be threatened. The 28th and rifle corps formed so as to defend the bridge ; whilst the 20th, 52nd, and 91st, under Sir John Moore in person, assumed a position on the summit of a hill in the rear.

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Here, likewise, the horse artillery took post; and now all was expectation and anxiety. The enemy came on with great apparent boldness. His cavalry and tirailleurs attempted to pass the bridge; they were met, not only by the fire of the riflemen, but by a heavy and well-directed cannonade from the high grounds, and they fell back. In a few moments they renewed their efforts on the same point, and with similar want of success; and again, after a short pause, for the third time. But they were beaten back in every attempt; till at last darkness put an end to the skirmish, and they withdrew. At eleven o'clock at night, however, our people abandoned their post. The troops were dreadfully harassed by their exertions, but not a man sank under them; and before morning they reached Lugo, where they found the whole army concentrated."

Early on the 7th, the French cavalry appeared in force, moving to the right of the position they had taken, and the English divisions formed in order of battle. It was, however, no part of Marshal Soult's policy to give his enemy any advantage which he had it in his power to withhold. So soon as he arrived before the British position, he made a strong *reconnaissance*, first on the British centre with four guns and a few squadrons, and afterwards on the left with a heavy column of artillery and infantry. From the centre he was driven off by a cannonade of 15 pieces, and otherwise severely handled. By this affair he lost 400 men. Throughout the 8th the two armies lay in each other's sight, but Soult declined the attack. The British general, satisfied with this demonstration, and with having brought his pursuers to a stand, decamped in the night. Here again they were subjected to fresh trials, two divisions having completely lost their way; and in a few hours the soldiers who had stood in position so willingly the day before, became once more a gang of fugitives and marauders. Between Sahagan and Lugo the casualties, including those who fell in action, amounted to 1500. Discipline having been restored by the prospect of being allowed to fight at Corunna, the columns marched to that city in tolerable order.

The halt had the desired effect. The stragglers were

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enabled to join their battalions; and, as the enemy only appeared at evening, and showed a cavalry force unsupported by infantry, the wandering soldiers, united when hard pressed, rallied under some non-commissioned officers, and repulsing the French dragoons, rejoined their corps in safety. The retreat was now continued with little interruption from the enemy. "Battalions that, on the morning of the 10th, entered Betanzos reduced to skeletons, marched from thence on the 11th, strong and effective;" and the column, comprising the whole of the infantry, as it descended towards Corunna, favoured by a fine day, and a short and order'y march, would never have been recognized as the disorder'y and wretched-looking multitude which had cumbered the line of march from Lugo to Betanzos.

Corunna was gained—but no vessels appeared in the harbour—and no means to remove the army were in hand. The indecision of Sir John Moore respecting the point from which he should embark his troops had embarrassed the English admiral; and contrary winds prevented the transports from coming round. Then, indeed, lost opportunities were regretted; all lamented "*that a battle had not been fought long before,—for it was quite manifest that to embark without fighting was entirely out of the question*"—and *positions had been* abandoned in every respect preferable to any that the English general could now command.

Early on the 12th the battle ground was selected. Around the village of Elvina, a mile and a half distant from the town, a semicircle of swelling heights arises. Farther advanced, the ground is much bolder, and consequently more defensible; but though a stronger position could have been obtained upon these heights, a much greater force than Moore could have employed would have been required for its occupation.

The land front of the fortress of Corunna was strengthened, and the sea face dismantled. On the 13th, a magazine, containing 4000 barrels of gunpowder, situated upon a hill about three miles from the city, was fired. The explosion was terrific; the earth trembled, the waters were agitated; and everybody stood for a short awful pause,

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breathless and grave. The horses were brought out and shot, the ground about Corunna not being practicable for cavalry.

On the evening of the 14th the anxiously-expected transports hove in sight, and the embarkation of the sick and wounded, with the women and children, began and was continued throughout the night. The next day the artillery, with the exception of eight British and four Spanish guns, was safely shipped. About 2 p.m., the French troops beat to arms and prepared to attack the British position. Our army, 11,500 strong, was drawn up on the only position it was possible for it to occupy. A lofty range of rocky heights encircled and commanded it, within range of cannon-shot, and here the French general had formed his position. Marshal Soult had 20,000 men under arms. Under a heavy fire from the guns in battery on the left of his line, and the whole of his field artillery, he came forward with his artillery formed in three solid columns, and covered by the whole of his light troops in light skirmishing order. The British pickets were immediately driven in, and the village of Elvina carried. Pursuing this success, the first column of the French, with one wing, assailed the right division under Baird, while with the other it outflanked him by the valley. The second column attacked the English centre; and the third marched by Palavia against the left. No time had been consumed in manœuvring, and the manner in which Soult came boldly forward showed a firm determination on his part to bring matters to a decisive issue. The British general met these movements promptly, and detached the reserve, under Paget, to turn the French left, and threaten the battery on the ridge. Fraser was directed to support this movement; and the 4th regiment, forming the right of Baird's division, was thrown back, and opened a flanking fire upon the column moving by the valley, while the 50th and 42nd were ordered to retake the village of Elvina. A severe and protracted struggle here took place; but the French were forced from the enclosures, and eventually from the village itself. The 42nd having fallen back, the enemy, reinforced, again rushed forward; and Elvina became a second time the scene of a severe encounter.

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The reserve had now come into action, and supporting the light troops who held the valley, checked the advance of the enemy there. The left and centre were also warmly engaged; and along the whole line, from right to left, the attacks of the enemy were furiously made, and as steadily repelled. Almost the whole of the British divisions were now under fire; men on both sides fell fast, and the right wing had lost its general, for Sir David Baird had been severely wounded and carried off the field. At this period of the battle, while the attention of Sir John Moore was engrossed in watching the arduous struggle between his troops and the enemy for the possession of Elvina, a round shot struck his left breast, and threw him heavily upon the ground; but though the wound was mortal, he raised himself to a sitting posture, and for a few moments followed with his eyes the movements of the troops, who were gaining ground rapidly. The sight appeared to give him pleasure; his countenance brightened, and he allowed himself to be removed from the field. In the meantime all went gallantly on. The reserve having cleared the valley of the enemy's dismounted dragoons, turned Soult's left, and threatened the high ground on which the French battery was raised. Elvina had been carried at the point of the bayonet, and Palavia was in possession of the English. Night was falling fast. The British were far in advance of the ground which they originally occupied, and the enemy falling back in evident confusion. Soult's defeat was complete, and had light but lasted for an hour or two, his discomfiture would have been signally disastrous. His ammunition was nearly expended. The Mero, in his rear, was now filled by the tide, and the half-ruined bridge of El Burgo was the only means by which the beaten army could retire. But circumstances did not justify Sir John Hope, who had assumed the command, to continue a battle in the dark with an enemy of superior force, and in a strong position. He accordingly contented himself with carrying out the original intentions of the dying general, and proceeded to embark the troops without difficulty or confusion. The operation was ably executed; the pickets, having lighted their fires, covered the retirement of the columns; and when morning broke, they, in

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turn, fell back upon the beach, "under the protection of Hill's brigade, which was posted near the ramparts of the town."

The losses sustained by the rival armies were very disproportionate—the British casualties being only estimated at 800 men, while those of the French were computed at nearly 3000. The disparity in casualties, circumstances will readily account for. The superiority of the French artillery was rendered unavailing from the broken surface not permitting the guns to be advanced; while those of the British, though few, were already in position, and consequently were worked with murderous effect. An ample supply also of muskets and fresh ammunition had been found in store at Corunna; and the arms, which accident and bad weather had rendered in a great degree unserviceable, were fortunately replaced by others fresh from England. From these causes, the British fire had been very superior to that maintained by the French.

Never was victory so heavily alloyed by an individual calamity as that of Corunna, by the fall of Sir John Moore. His last hours were cheered by the consciousness that for his country he had done his best—and his death was in perfect keeping with the chivalrous character an honourable career had earned for him. To the last his intellect continued clear; notwithstanding that the severity of his wound must have occasioned intense suffering, no mental aberrations were apparent to those around him—and although his sword was painfully inconvenient, he refused the kind offices of those who would have removed it, remarking—"It is as well as it is; I had rather it should go out of the field with me."

He was removed in a blanket by six soldiers, who evinced their sympathy by tears; and when a spring-waggon came up, and it was proposed that Sir John should be transferred to it, the poor fellows respectfully objected, as they would "keep step, and carry him more easily." Their wishes were attended to, and the dying general was conveyed slowly to his quarters in the town, occasionally stopping the bearers to look back upon the field, whenever an increased firing arrested his attention. All hope was over: he lingered for a little, talking freely, but collectedly,

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to those around, and dividing his last thoughts apparently between his country and his kindred. The kindness of his disposition was in death remarkable. Turning to an aide-de-camp, he desired to be remembered to his sister—and feebly pressing Colonel Anderson's hand, his head dropped back, and he died without a struggle. As a wish had been expressed by the departed that he should be laid in the field in which he fell, the rampart of the citadel was happily chosen for his final resting-place. A working party of the 9th turned up the earth—and at midnight, wrapped in a cloak and blanket, his uncoffined remains were interred by the officers of his staff,—the burial-service was read by torch-light,—earth fell on kindred clay,—the grave was filled,—and in the poet's words, "They left him alone in his glory."

CHAPTER VI

THE condition of Spain at the beginning of the year 1809 was gloomy enough. Her undisciplined armies had been scattered in all directions, and a fine English force, to which Spaniards had naturally looked for support and co-operation, had sought the shelter of its ships without making a single effort in their behalf. The presence of 200,000 Frenchmen in the country, associated with all the prestige that attached to the name of Buonaparte, seemed to forbid hope, and to confirm the most gloomy anticipations for the future. From the day on which the last transport left Corunna, the subjugation of the Peninsula was looked upon as inevitable. The unexpected departure of Napoleon to lead fresh armies into Austria improved but little the gloomy aspect of affairs. He had left his lieutenants, men of his own calibre, behind him. His brother Joseph seemed once again firmly seated on the throne of Spain. The siege of Barcelona had been raised, and Catalonia subjugated by the dispersion of the army of that province on the Lobregat; the city of Zaragoza, which had been again invested, could hardly be expected to maintain a protracted resistance; the mountain barrier of Andalusia stood in little stead against invaders, when

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its defence was entrusted to the troops that fled from a regiment of lancers at the pass of Somosierra; and Portugal, now left almost wholly to her own resources, could offer but little effectual resistance to the common enemy. In fine, Napoleon, when he had given orders to his marshals to march on Corunna, Lisbon, Cadiz, and Valencia, returned to France with the firm conviction that the war in Spain was concluded. If such were his impression, he reckoned without his host.

The British Cabinet, happily not subdued by the recent disasters in the Peninsula, resolved to reinforce their armies; and encouraged by an application to that effect from the Portuguese Government, resolved to send out a general officer, capable of organizing and disciplining all the Portuguese regiments anew; and by thus subsidizing and arming the native forces, to make them for a season its own. The choice of the Portuguese Government fell upon Sir Arthur Wellesley as the commander of its forces, and the British Ministry made him a tender of the post accordingly, which he, at once, declined. Many officers of rank sought the appointment; and it was ultimately bestowed upon Major-General Beresford, an officer of considerable influence, and one in many respects eminently fitted for undertaking the duties of reform and reorganization which were demanded at his hands. General (now Marshal) Beresford landed at Lisbon in March; and having received his commission, commenced that salutary reform in the Portuguese army which has earned him so much honour. Several British officers were in the first instance attached to Portuguese regiments; and the number was afterwards largely increased, until the staff and most of the superior situations were held by Englishmen.

It was to the sagacity of Sir Arthur Wellesley that the Government was indebted for the suggestion that Portugal should be the basis of all our operations in the Peninsula; and the grounds assigned by him for that preference were too obvious to be questioned for a moment. It cannot be supposed that, whilst these stirring events were in progress in a country in which he had already earned so high a reputation, Sir Arthur Wellesley had not given many

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anxious thoughts to the scenes of his former exploits; but it was ever his most marked characteristic to do everything with his whole heart, whether acting in a civil or military capacity.

Sir Arthur Wellesley was by the unanimous voice of the Cabinet appointed to the Command-in-Chief in the Peninsula, *vice* Sir John Cradock, who though an "older," was clearly not a "better" soldier than his successor.

Sir Arthur set sail from Portsmouth on the 16th of April, 1809, in His Majesty's ship *Surveillante*, and narrowly escaped shipwreck the same night. In striving to pass a bank which runs out from St. Catherine's Point, the ship missed stays several times, each failure bringing her nearer to the shore, until she approached so near that the breakers were close upon her bow. The wind, which had been blowing on the shore, nowever, suddenly changed, and further danger was averted. On the 22nd of the same month, the *Surveillante* anchored in the Tagus, and Sir Arthur was received at Lisbon with every demonstration of joy.

When Sir Arthur took the command, Sir John Cradock was at Leiria, and General Beresford at Thomar. Soult was still in possession of Oporto; and Lapisse, with the Duke of Belluno, at Merida.

The head-quarters of the British army now quitted Lisbon, halted at Pombal on the 1st of May, and reached Coimbra on the 2nd, where the allied forces were concentrated on the 5th. Marshal Beresford retained, under his personal command, 6000 Portuguese. The force of Trant was on the Venga; that of Silveira on the Lamego; and Sir Robert Wilson, with some Portuguese troops, at Vizeu. On the 7th the advanced-guard of the allied army was in motion on the Oporto road, followed by the whole force, which consisted of 14,500 infantry, 1500 cavalry, and 24 guns. The troops were arranged in four divisions,—one of cavalry and three of infantry. Soult's position was somewhat critical at Oporto, for beside a menaced attack of the British army, which threatened him from the south, a Portuguese corps, under Silveira was on the Tamega, to his left. The British general's object was to throw a strong corps upon Soult's left, at

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Amarante, previous to the advance of the main body from Coimbra on Oporto. He thus hoped to envelop the Marshal, and capture his whole corps. Soult, although ignorant that the British were moving on Coimbra, saw the necessity of restoring the communication by Amarante, and detached General Loison, with 6000 men, to attack Silveira, whom he defeated on the 2nd of May, and drove across the Douro to Lamego, establishing himself on the left bank of that river. The intelligence of this success did not induce Sir Arthur to alter his plan of operations. On the 9th the main body of the British army marched from Coimbra, and the next day the advanced-guard of the French, consisting of 4000 infantry and some cavalry, was discovered strongly posted above Grijon. An attack on their left turned that flank; and they were closely pursued, many being killed or taken. Hearing that his advanced guard had been repulsed, Soult moved the whole of his troops across the river, destroying the floating bridge. He also caused all the boats to be collected and secured on the northern side of the river. It became now of great importance to the British troops to cross the Douro, and act in concert with Marshal Beresford; but there were no boats, and Soult was posted on the opposite bank ready to prevent their passage, and, believing that they would be unable to cross the river, was preparing to retire leisurely by the road leading into Galicia.

The Douro, a rapid river, 300 yards wide, would, even without the presence of a hostile army on the other side, have proved a formidable obstacle. Unprovided as the British troops were with boats, or any visible means of getting across, it did seem to present for a time a serious difficulty; but it did not prove an insurmountable one to the British general. Having observed a large unfurnished building, called the Seminary, encompassed by a high stone wall, on the opposite side of the river, a little to the right of the town, it struck him as affording a good defensible post, could he contrive to transport a small body of infantry across to occupy it.

By what trifling agencies have not the boldest projects been successfully carried out; but, in the annals of modern warfare, never was a splendid enterprise achieved whose

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opening means were so superlatively contemptible. Colonel Waters, a Portuguese partisan, had communicated to Sir Arthur the information that the bridge had been destroyed, and he had been despatched on what appeared the hopeless errand of finding some mode of transport. Fortune unexpectedly befriended him: a barber of Oporto had eluded the vigilance of Soult's patrols, and paddled his skiff to his dwelling across the river, where he was found by the colonel in company with the Prior of Amarante; and the latter having volunteered his services, the barber consented to assist. With these unmilitary associates, Waters crossed the stream, and in half an hour returned, unperceived, with several large barges.

Seizing the boon which fortune offered, Sir Arthur instantly got twenty pieces of cannon placed in battery in the convent gardens, and dispatched General Murray, with the Germans, part of the 14th Light Dragoons, and two guns, to cross the river at Avintas, and descend by the opposite bank. There was no movement in the city which indicated that the enemy apprehended an attack—not a patrol had showed itself—and an ominous tranquillity bespoke a fatal confidence. A barge was reported ready to attempt a passage. "Let the men cross!" was the laconic order; and that order was promptly obeyed. An officer and twenty-five of the 8rd Regiment (Bufs) jumped on board; and in twelve minutes they had landed, unseen and unopposed.

A second boat effected its passage with similar celerity and security; but the third, in which General Paget had embarked, was discovered by the enemy—and a scene which may be fancied, but not described, ensued. The rattle of the French drums, as they beat to arms, was nearly drowned in the outcries of the citizens, who witnessed the daring effort, which they encouraged by their cheers, but which, unhappily, they wanted means to second. Disregarding order, in their anxiety to reach the threatened point, the French troops poured out of the city, their skirmishers hurrying on in double quick to arrest, if possible, the farther transit of the boats, and crush those already landed, before they could be supported from the other shore. The British artillery thundered

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from the convent garden; and the divisions of Paget, Hill, and Sherbrooke crowded the banks, gazing on a contest in which, for the present, they could take no share.

The seminary was furiously assailed—General Paget was severely wounded—and the command devolved on General Hill. On each side the numbers of the combatants increased; but on the French side in fourfold proportion. To one side of the building, however, the French attack was restricted; for the guns from the Serra swept the other approaches, and maintained a fire, under which, from its precision and rapidity, the French refused to come forward. Presently the lower portion of the city was abandoned, and the inhabitants pushed boats over the river, and, in large parties, brought the Guards across. Three battalions were already established in the seminary. The detached corps, under Murray, was descried moving rapidly down the right bank of the Douro; and the assailants abandoned the attack and commenced a disorderly retreat.

“Horse, foot, and cannon, now rushed tumultuously towards the rear; the city was hastily evacuated, amidst the enthusiastic cheers of the people: Hill’s central column threw them into utter confusion; and nothing but the inactivity of Murray, on the right, who did not make the use he might of his advantageous position on the flank of the retreating host, preserved them from total ruin. As it was, they lost 500 killed and wounded, five guns, and a large quantity of ammunition, in the action: 700 sick were taken in the hospital, and 50 French guns in the arsenal; and so complete and unexpected was the surprise, that Wellington, at four o’clock, quietly sat down to the dinner and table service which had been prepared for Marshal Soult.”

Thus terminated this brilliant exploit, which was accomplished with a loss of only 23 killed and 98 wounded, whilst that of the enemy exceeded 500. Five guns were taken in the field; fifty more, with a quantity of ammunition and stores, were found in the arsenal; and several hundred sick remained in the French hospitals. Universal rejoicing reigned that evening in Oporto.

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CHAPTER VII

THE passage of the Douro has been justly considered one of Sir Arthur's most brilliant achievements, whilst the consequences to which it led were of the greatest importance. The sick soldiers left by Soult in Oporto would have been butchered by the inhabitants but for the interposition of Sir Arthur Wellesley, who issued a proclamation enjoining them, in the most peremptory manner, not to molest them. "I call upon you," said he, "to be merciful. By the laws of war, these Frenchmen are entitled to my protection, which I am determined to afford them." He also wrote immediately to Marshal Soult, requesting him to send some medical officers, as he could not spare his own army surgeons, to take care of his sick and wounded; promising that they should be restored to him so soon as they had cured the wounded.

The genius of Soult was strikingly displayed on this occasion: to save his army from annihilation, baggage, booty, stores, and artillery, were unhesitatingly abandoned; and by this necessary sacrifice he was enabled to reach Orense with 19,000 of his troops, the remnant of the 26,000 with which he had passed the frontier. Thus disencumbered, he got clear of pursuit, and a threatened movement on Estremadura confirmed the British general in his determination to return to the Tagus.

Sir Arthur Wellesley now turned his horse's head towards the Tagus, directing his whole attention to his approaching struggle with Victor; and, on his arrival at Oporto, he prepared to act vigorously with Cuesta. A reinforcement of 5000 men having recently arrived from England, and authority having been granted to extend the operations of the army into Spain, Sir Arthur trusted, by combining with Cuesta, whose army consisted of 38,000 troops, to inflict a severe blow on Marshal Victor.

The British army marched by both sides of the Tagus upon Plasencia, where it arrived on the 10th of July, when Sir Arthur lost no time in seeking a conference with Cuesta, in order to concert future operations. He found him a worn-out superannuated old man, physically unfit,

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whatever his mental powers might have been, for the command of an army. As for his troops, they were composed chiefly of raw recruits, deficient in all the means and appliances of war. Sir Arthur had doubtless sad misgivings when he placed this rugged, undisciplined force, a few days afterwards, on the British right at Salamanca.

The first occasion on which Sir Arthur Wellesley assumed the command of the allied forces was on the 27th of July, 1809, in the neighbourhood of Talavera da Reyna. Seeing the confusion beyond Alberche, he knew that a battle was at hand; and being satisfied that only in a strong position could the Spaniards be brought to stand a shock, he prevailed upon Cuesta, with much difficulty, to withdraw to Talavera, where there was ground suited for defence. Leaving Mackenzie's division and a brigade of cavalry to cover a retrograde movement, he took up a position six miles in the rear between Alberche and Talavera; the ground was covered with olive and cork trees; and nearly parallel with the Tagus, at a distance of two miles, a chain of round steep hills bounded this woody plain. The position taken up by the troops on this occasion occupied about two miles; Sir Arthur, taking Talavera as his fixed point, selected it for the right of the Spaniards. The ground on the left, where the British army was stationed, was open, and commanded by a height forming the first range of the Sierra de Mont-alban, on which was posted *en echelon* a division of infantry, under the orders of Major-General Hill. The right of the British infantry touched the Spanish left, and stretched along the open country to the hill on the extreme left; behind them was the mountain of which we have just spoken, and in front of it was a difficult ravine. The division of General Campbell was on the British right; next him was posted Sherbrooke; then Mackenzie's ground, held for a time by part of Sherbrooke's division: part of the British cavalry was with General Mackenzie in advance. The division of that general was in the wood near Casa des Salinas.

About three o'clock some French light infantry made a dash through the wood, and partially surprised the

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British posts : two columns falling with great impetuosity upon the British, separated the two brigades, composed chiefly of young battalions, and threw them into confusion. Sir Arthur, who had ascended the tower immediately in their rear, fortunately observed them falter, and was just in time to avoid being captured, as with difficulty he threw himself on his horse in the midst of the *mêlée*. In the meantime the 45th regiment, some companies of the 5th, and a battalion of the 60th, checked the enemy, who, however, continued their attack, which had now extended along the whole line, growing more animated as the evening began to close in. The British position on the left appeared to be the grand object of the French marshal; for though Joseph Buonaparte commanded nominally, Marshals Sebastiani, Jourdan, Victor, and Mor'ier were in the field. They directed a strong force against it, forming their infantry into columns of battalions, which advanced in double quick time, supported by a furious cannonade. Mackenzie's division having retired for a space, and at the moment forming a second line, the brunt of the assault fell upon the smaller brigade under General Donkin, then in possession of the height. Although they received a check in front, Donkin's flank was turned on the left, and they got possession of the post. But their triumph did not last long; Hill instantly led up the 48th, 29th, and 1st battalions of detachments. The French were forced from the position with heavy loss, and the ridge was again carried by a wing of the 29th at the point of the bayonet.

At this period the battle was seriously endangered. Cuesta, from the strength of his position, might have been considered safe enough; but, as it appeared, no local advantages could secure his wretched troops, or render them trustworthy for an hour. While Victor, animated by the success of his first operation, followed Donkin with Villatte's division and the whole of his light cavalry and guns, the fourth corps and French reserve, which were directed against the right, sent their cavalry forward to induce the Spaniards to unmask their line of battle. The French horsemen rode boldly up to the front, and commenced skirmishing with their pistols, and the

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Spaniards answered them with a general discharge of small arms; but at that moment, 10,000 infantry, and all the artillery, breaking their ranks, fled to the rear: the artillerymen carried off their horses; the infantry threw away their arms, and the Adjutant-General O'Donogue was amongst the foremost of the fugitives. Nay, Cuesta himself was in movement towards the rear. The panic spread, and the French would fain have charged; but Sir Arthur Wellesley, who was at hand, immediately flanked the main road with some English squadrons: the ditches on the other side rendered the country impracticable; and the fire of musketry being renewed by those Spaniards who remained, the enemy lost some men, and finally retreated in disorder.

Notwithstanding darkness had now set in, the French rushed once more forward to wrest the height from its defenders, and were driven down the hill at the point of the bayonet. So desperately was this night's fighting carried on, and the regiments so closely engaged, that in the *mêlées* some of the men fought with clubbed muskets. A feint had been made by Lapisse upon the Germans in the centre, whilst with the *élite* of their infantry, Ruffin and Villatte once more assembled on the heights, but were repulsed with great slaughter. The loss of the British, in the affair of Salinas, amounted to about 400, and the combat upon the hill at dusk must have cost as many more.

The British lay on their arms all night, the dragoons by their saddled steeds, and the infantry close to the pile of arms, or with their firelocks in their hands. About dawn, the enemy made dispositions to assault the hill. Under cover of a furious fire of artillery from a corresponding height, two strong columns were led against the British left, but were beaten off with heavy loss.

The work of slaughter, which had never intermitted from five in the morning, ceased between nine and ten o'clock, as if by common consent, for some three hours. The French applied themselves to cooking their dinners, and the English and their allies produced their scantier rations.

During this cessation of hostilities, a remarkable

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incident occurred. A small stream, tributary to the Tagus, flowed through the field of battle, and separated the combatants. During the pause, both armies went to the banks of the rivulet for water. The men approached each other fearlessly, threw down their caps and muskets, chatted with each other, shook hands, and even exchanged their brandy-flasks and wine-skins. Suddenly the bugles sounded, the drums beat to arms; many of the rival soldiery shook hands and parted, with expressions of mutual regard; and in ten minutes afterwards they were resolutely pointing their bayonets against each other. A fire from eighty pieces of artillery announced the forward movement of the columns, which soon presented themselves covered by a cloud of light infantry; but not a shot was returned by the British. Their orders to reserve their fire were rigidly obeyed; and the files steadily and quickly closed up, for the men were falling by dozens. When their assailants had approached within twenty yards, a tremendous volley was delivered from the English line, and the bayonets did the rest. Campbell's division on the right totally defeated the attack upon it; and charging boldly in return, drove the enemy back, and captured a battery of ten guns. On the left, the attack failed altogether,—the British troops putting the French skirmishers aside, met the advancing columns with loud shouts, and, breaking in on their front, and lapping their flanks with fire, gave them no respite, but pushed them back with a terrible carnage. Ten guns were taken; but, as General Campbell prudently forbore pursuit, the French rallied on their supports, and made a show of attacking again. Vain attempt! The British artillery and musketry played furiously upon their masses, and a Spanish regiment of cavalry charging on their flank at the same time, the whole retired in disorder, and the victory was secured in that quarter.

The most daring and the most disastrous effort of the day remains to be narrated. The French, still intent upon seizing the left of the position, moved up the valley in force; and Anson's light brigade of cavalry was ordered to charge the columns as they came forward. The ground was treacherous—flat, apparently, to the eye, while a

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dangerous and narrow ravine secured the French infantry completely. The word was given; the brigade advanced at a steady canter; a plain was, as they believed, before them; and in full blood, what should check their career? Colonel Elley, who was some lengths in advance of the 23rd, was the first who discovered the obstacle in their road, and vainly endeavoured to check the charge, and apprise his companions of the dangerous ground they had to pass; but, advancing with such velocity, the line was on the verge of the stream before his signs could be either understood or attended to. Under any circumstances, this must have been a serious occurrence in a cavalry charge; but when it is considered that 400 or 500 dragoons were assailing two divisions of infantry, unbroken, and fully prepared for the onset, to have persevered at all was highly honourable to the regiment.

At this moment, the enemy formed in squares, and opened his tremendous fire. A charge immediately took place. Horses rolled on the earth; others were seen flying back, dragging their unhorsed riders with them. The German hussars pulled up; but although the line of the 23rd was broken, still that regiment galloped forward. The confusion was increased; but no hesitation took place in the individuals of this gallant corps. The survivors rushed on with, if possible, accelerated pace, passing between the flank of the square, now one general blaze of fire, and the building on its left.

It was strange that, under such circumstances, men should think of anything but securing a retreat. The Germans, on arriving at the brink of the ravine, had reined sharply up; and though they suffered heavily from the French musketry, galloped out of fire, and re-formed behind Bassécourt's Spanish division, which was in observation in the rear. Struggling through the water-course, the survivors of the 23rd, as they gained the bank in two's and three's, formed, and passing the French infantry at speed, "fell with inexpressible fury on a brigade of chasseurs in the rear." A momentary success attended this reckless display of valour; but a body of Polish lancers and Westphalian light-horse came up, and to resist such odds was hopeless.

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"The situation of the 23rd was now very critical. To return directly from whence the regiment had advanced, was impracticable. By doing so, the surviving soldiers must have again sustained a close and deadly fire from the French squares; and although the chasseurs had given way, another line of cavalry was in their front. To their right was the whole French army; to their left, and in rear of the enemy's infantry, was the only possible line of escape. This was adopted. In small parties, or singly, they again regained the valley, re-forming in rear of General Fane's brigade, the advance of which had been countermanded after the unsuccessful result of the first charge was ascertained."

A furious attack made upon Sherbrooke's division was among the most gallant efforts of the day. Under a storm of artillery, the French columns fairly came forward, as if they intended to leave the issue to "cold iron;" but they never crossed a bayonet, were charged in turn, and repelled with serious loss.

"Who has ever seen an unbroken line preserved in following up a successful bayonet-charge?" The Guards, carried forward by victorious excitement, advanced too far, and found themselves assailed by the French reserve, and mowed down by an overwhelming fire. "They fell back; but as whole sections were swept away, their ranks became disordered, and nothing but their stubborn gallantry prevented a total *derouté*. Their situation was most critical: had the French cavalry charged home, nothing could have saved them. Wellesley saw the danger, and speedily dispatched support. A brigade of horse was ordered up, and the 48th moved from the heights we occupied to assist our hard-pressed comrades. We came on at double-quick, and formed in the rear by companies, and through the intervals in our line the broken ranks of the Guards retreated. A close and well-directed volley from us arrested the progress of the victorious French, while, with amazing celerity and coolness, the Guards rallied and re-formed, and in a few minutes advanced in turn to support us. As they came on, the men gave a loud huzza. An Irish regiment to the right answered it with a thrilling cheer. It was taken up

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from regiment to regiment, and passed along the English line; and that wild shout told the advancing enemy that British valour was indomitable. The leading files of the French halted—turned—fell back—and never made another effort.”

It may be readily imagined that the loss entailed upon both armies, by a sanguinary and protracted struggle like that of Talavera, must be enormous. On the British side, Generals Mackenzie and Langworth fell; and the entire casualties amounted to 5423. The French loss was infinitely greater. According to the returns of Jourdan and Semele, they had 2 general officers, 944 killed, 6294 wounded, and 156 made prisoners—being in all 7389. But English and Spanish writers assert that their casualties were much greater, and return the total loss at fully 10,000 men.

“The battle ended at about 6 o'clock, and after that hour scarcely a shot was heard. Both armies occupied the positions of the morning, and the British bivouacked on the field, with little food, and no shelter; while the dead lay silently around, and the moans of the wounded broke sadly on the ear, as they were conveyed all through the night to the hospitals in Salamanca.”

A damp, cold night succeeded a burning day. Without food, covering, or even water, the British bivouacs were cheerless enough; but, except from wounded men, not a murmur was heard—not a complaint escaped. When morning broke, the English brigades—“feeble and few, but fearless still”—rose at the first tap of the drum, and once more stood gallantly to their arms.

On the day after the battle, a welcome reinforcement joined the conqueror's army. By an unparalleled exertion, the light brigade, consisting of the 43rd, 52nd, and 96th regiments, arrived on the 29th on the battle ground, and immediately took outpost duty. The regiments had marched twenty miles, and were bivouacked for the night, when intelligence reached their commanding officer that Sir Arthur Wellesley was on the eve of a battle. As they advanced, the fugitives of Cuesta were hurrying from the field in crowds, and assured them that the struggle had ended; that the British army had been totally defeated,

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and Sir Arthur Wellesley killed. Indignant at the conduct of these despicable poltroons, they pressed forward with redoubled haste, and in twenty-six hours accomplished a march of sixty-two English miles. This achievement was executed in heavy marching order, over a country in which water was scarce, and beneath a burning sun

CHAPTER VIII

HAVING retreated before 14,000 British, the French marshals were little likely to return and renew the combat with 17,000. Notwithstanding this splendid victory, however, the gallant Wellesley was still environed by difficulties of no ordinary kind. On the 30th of July he learned that Soult was moving towards the pass of Banos, and had ordered 12,000 rations to be in readiness for his troops. Although he was not without hope that the Spanish force in the Puerto de Banos might be able to make some defence if the enemy really ventured to advance, Sir Arthur urged Cuesta to send a division of proper strength to that point without loss of time; but this, as usual, he refused to do, and it was not until the morning of the 2nd of August that Sir Arthur could prevail upon him to detach General Bassecourt for that purpose. On that day, however, news arrived that the enemy had entered Plasencia, and that the Marquis de la Reyna, whose two battalions consisted only of 600 men, had abandoned the pass of Banos without firing a shot; and had hastened on to Almaraz for the purpose of destroying its bridge. Cuesta now proposed that half the army should march to the rear, and that the other half should maintain the post of Talavera. To this proposal Sir Arthur would, he well knew, decline to consent. On the 3rd, therefore, Sir Arthur marched from Talavera to Oropesa, with the view of uniting with Bassecourt's division, and giving battle to the enemy (whose force he estimated at 15,000 men) at Plasencia. He had provided for all the wounded that were in a condition to be removed,

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leaving the rest at Talavera under the protection of Cuesta. On the evening of the same day, however, he learned that the French had advanced from Plasencia to Naval Moral, and were, at that moment, between the Allies and the bridge of Almaraz. Further information reached him a few hours afterwards from Cuesta that Soult's force was much larger than he imagined; that the French were again advancing in his front, and that he should break up from Talavera that evening, and march to join the main body. This monstrous abandonment of the sick and wounded in the hospitals greatly annoyed Sir Arthur; but remonstrance proved useless, as he was already on his way. At mid-day on the 3rd he crossed the Tagus, and took up a strong position among the rugged hills on the other side.

The disgraceful conduct of the Spanish authorities in neglecting to furnish the supplies which were indispensably necessary for the subsistence of the British troops, led the British General to announce his determination to withdraw his army from the country. Mules, 500 in a body, were continually passing through the famished troops of Sir Arthur, laden with provisions, whilst nothing whatever was to be obtained for themselves. Fresh promises were made and broken. On the 20th of August the British army moved from Jaraicejo towards Truxillo, and subsequently continued its march to the frontier of Portugal, by the routes of Merida and Caceres. Head-quarters were fixed at Badajoz, and cantonments were selected within the Spanish frontier, where the troops at length obtained the needful supply of food. The threat of the General to evacuate the country appears to have alarmed the Junta, and created universal consternation; and, at their instance, Lord Wellesley suggested to his brother to take, in conjunction with the Spanish forces, a defensive position behind the Guadiana, with a view to cover Andalusia. But Sir Arthur possessed ample experience of the troops and civil authorities of Spain, and resolved to engage in no future operations the success of which in any respect depended upon them. He explained, in considerable detail, his reasons for declining to adopt his brother's suggestions. He recommended that the Spanish general

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should continue to hold the post near Almaraz and Deleytosa, sending the pontoon-bridge at the frontier to Badajoz.

The privations which had been endured by the British troops had led to the usual consequences: great sickness among them; and the want of proper medicine and medical officers had occasioned a frightful mortality in their ranks. The handful of troops which Sir Arthur Wellesley now commanded was composed of second battalions, of mere youths, both officers and men. Indeed, the Guards, the Buffs, the 48th, and 61st, with the Light Division, which had lately joined, under General Craufurd, were the only portions of the army which could be regarded as fit for service. The cavalry was also in a very crippled state, fifteen hundred horses having perished for want of food. "Dysentery, that scourge of armies," says Napier, "raged; and, in a short time, above five thousand men died in hospitals."

The position of the army near Badajoz was admirably selected for all military purposes: as by a junction with a Spanish corps on its right, or with a Portuguese and Spanish force on its left, it afforded facilities for protecting either Portugal or the South of Spain; and thus, although the French had not less than 80,000 troops at their disposal, they were unable to attempt any operation of importance with the slightest chance of success. Still the prospects of the British army, rendered still more dreary by the inertness of their Allies, were exceedingly discouraging. Whilst, however, his soldiers lay prostrated by sickness, the mind of their great Commander was laying the foundation of the grand scheme for the preservation of Portugal, which enabled him eventually to deliver the entire Peninsula. It was a mighty project, and was carried out in a spirit altogether worthy of its conception.

Fully convinced that to defend successfully the extensive frontier of Portugal with the inadequate force at his disposal was perfectly impossible, Wellesley decided on confining his attention to the protection of Lisbon—an object which could only be attained by abandoning the rest of the country to the invader, and barring out his approach to that city by means of a very strong position

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in front. To explain the difficulties which attended the execution of this project, it becomes necessary to mention, that north of the Tagus several roads from Spain converge upon Lisbon, whilst the mountainous character of the country renders lateral communication between the main roads all but impracticable. Another obstacle presented itself to the realization of such a plan, in the fact that the Tagus is fordable in many places during the summer months, even as low down as Salvaterra. Hence, the most advantageous mode of carrying troops to the capital, is by two lines of operation, one north, and the other south of the river. Having weighed carefully these considerations, Wellesley made choice of a position extending from Alhandra, on the Tagus, across to Torres Vedras and the ocean.

On the 16th of September, a notification was received at head-quarters that His Majesty had been pleased to elevate Sir Arthur Wellesley to the Peerage, by the titles of Baron Douro of Wellesley, and Viscount Wellington of Talavera and of Wellington, in the county of Somerset. The patent bore date August 26, 1809. The thanks of Parliament were also voted to him unanimously for his services at Talavera.

Impatient of the resistance which had been offered to his invasion of Spain, Napoleon determined to overwhelm it by numbers. By the latter end of 1809, 120,000 of the Army of the Rhine had crossed the Pyrenees; 20,000 of the Imperial Guard were marching on the Bidassoa; a corps of Poles and Italians had entered Catalonia; and a powerful siege-train and nearly 800 carriages, with stores and ammunition, were moving by the Burgos road. The grand total of the French army within the Pyrenees is said to have amounted to 365,000 men. From the *élite* of this enormous force two grand armies were formed, each comprising three distinct corps. The first, under the command of the Duke of Dalmatia, was composed of the corps of Victor, Mortier, and Sebastiani, with a reserve under General Dessoles. The second comprised the corps of Ney, Junot, and part of Victor's, and was intended to be employed by the Prince of Essling. The first *corps d'armée*, collected at the foot of the Sierra Morena, mustered

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65,000 men, and was intended to overrun Andalusia. The second, concentrated in the valley of the Tagus, amounted to 80,000 effective soldiers, and was destined to reduce Ciudad Rodrigo in the first instance, and finally to expel the English from Portugal. Such was the position of affairs in the Peninsula at the opening of the campaign of 1810.

Notwithstanding this threatening aspect of affairs, Lord Wellington appeared to be in no respect disheartened, but to rely confidently on his power to secure Lisbon and the other strongholds of Portugal; and he knew full well, that so long as the British kept Portugal, the French tenure in Spain could never be otherwise than insecure. By his masterly arrangements, the extreme of the defensive line were entrusted to the Portuguese militia and Ordenanza, while the whole of the regular troops occupied the central positions: thus enabling the British general, in two marches, to concentrate 40,000 splendid soldiers either at Guarda, or between that place and the Douro.

The allied brigades remained undisturbed in their respective cantonments until the early part of March, with the exception of the 2nd and Light Divisions. General Hill had been left upon the southern side of the Tagus, to preserve Lord Wellington's communications with Romana, who had thrown part of his corps into Badajoz. Mortier, with Regnier's corps, was in the neighbourhood of Merida, with 20,000 men, and occasionally assumed a threatening attitude, as if he intended an attack upon the fortress. "The French Marshal, whenever the humour took him, would advance, as if with the design of investing Badajoz—certain that, by so doing, he would draw Hill from his quarters; whilst Hill no sooner showed himself, than Mortier would again retire, and take up his former position."

But the Light Division was far more dangerously posted. Following the example of Mortier, Ney menaced Ciudad Rodrigo, and obliged Lord Wellington to strengthen that part of the line extending between Pinhel and Guarda, and push Craufurd with his division across the Coa, to observe the movements of the enemy. The 3rd division was brought forward to Pinhel, and Craufurd was reinforced

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with the 1st German Hussars, a troop of horse, and two battalions of Caçadores. The whole outpost duty along the Aguada was confided to the Light Division, and Cole and Picton were desired to support it. The appointment of Marshal Massena to the command of the army in Portugal was now officially announced; and since Hoche, Pichegru, and Moreau had disappeared, no one enjoyed so high a reputation, either with military men or with his imperial master. He entered upon his command with increased powers, and, as Soult had done before him, expected, in the event of his being able to conquer Portugal, to have her crown for his pains.

Massena's appointment seemed to be the signal for hostilities to commence. On the 25th of April a French corps encamped on the Pedro Toro, a height three miles eastward of Rodrigo. On the 30th, a second division bivouacked a league to the north, on the Val de Carras, and a third division took ground between them. In the middle of May, a fourth division encamped on Monte de Ibaurey, to the westward; and on the 4th of June, Rodrigo was regularly invested.

Ciudad Rodrigo is built on a rising ground, on the right bank of the Aguada, and has a double enceinte all round it. The interior wall is of an old construction, of the height of thirty-two feet, and is generally of bad masonry, without flanks, and with weak parapets and narrow ramparts. The exterior inclosure is a modern *fausse-braic*, of a low profile, constructed so far down the slope of the hill as to afford but little cover to the interior wall; and from the same defect of the rapid descent of the hill, the *fausse-braic* itself is very imperfectly covered by its glacis. On the eastern and southern sides there are ravelins to the *fausse-braic*, but in no part is there any covered way, nor are there any countermines. Without the town, at the distance of three hundred yards, the suburbs were enclosed by a bad earthen entrenchment, hastily thrown up. The ground without the place is generally flat, and the soil rocky, except on the north side, where there are two hills called the upper and the lower Teson; the one, at 180 yards from the works, rises nearly to the level of the ramparts, and the other, at 600 yards distance, to the

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height of thirteen feet above them. The soil on these hills is very stony, and during open weather in winter, water rises at the depth of six inches below the surface.

All doubt that Rodrigo was to be regularly besieged ended, when, on the 1st of June, Ney threw a trestle bridge over the Agueda, at Caridad—and, on the 5th, another across the river at Carboneras. With a garrison of 5000 men, and a population of about the same extent, Andres Herrasti prepared to hold out; and the defence which the old man made proved him “every inch” a soldier. No fortress was better defended, and none more furiously assailed; Ney “beginning his approaches, where a general more sparing of his army would have terminated them.” But this reckless expenditure of human life proved unavailing; and when Massena, on the 24th of June, assumed the command of “the Grand Army of Portugal,” he found by dear-bought experience that the mode of attack hitherto adopted must be changed, and recourse had to the slower, but more certain operations which Ney in his ardour had overlooked. Nor was the city closely approached without the assailants being exposed to considerable annoyance. The English general was within a march—a stern old soldier held the fortress—and one of those dangerous bodies of guerillas, which had risen on the ruins of the Spanish armies, had thrown itself into the place, and during the progress of the investment kept the besiegers in constant alarm, and occasioned them a heavy loss.

The guerillas, who had by this time become very formidable, were originally small bodies of Spaniards who, from various causes, had been compelled to fly from their homes, and to take up arms against the French. These men, inspired with an implacable hostility to their oppressors, were wont to issue from their places of refuge in the mountains, whenever small detachments of the invader were known to be on the move; and falling upon the unwary foe, seldom gave him any quarter. Their numbers increased by degrees, until at length a general incursive system was organized. Possessing a perfect knowledge of the country, and undistinguished by any uniform, they were able to disperse and reassemble at pleasure. They

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harassed the French, by cutting off their communications, intercepting their supplies, and destroying small foraging parties; whilst they were at all times secure in their mountain fastnesses. "To lead these guerilla bands," says Major Sherer, "the priest girded up his black robe, and stuck pistols in his belt; the student threw aside his books, and grasped a sword; the shepherd forsook his flock, the husbandman his home." Of all the guerilla leaders, the two Minas were the most remarkable for their daring, their talents, and their successes. The younger, Xavier, had a short career; but nothing could be more chivalrous and romantic than many of the incidents that marked it. His band amounted to a thousand—and with this force he kept Navarre, Biscay, and Aragon in confusion: intercepted convoys, levied contributions, plundered the custom-houses, and harassed the enemy incessantly. The villages were obliged to furnish rations for his troops, and the French convoys supplied him with money and ammunition. His escapes were often marvellous. He swam rivers deemed impassable, and climbed precipices hitherto untraversed by a human foot. Near Estella, he was forced by numbers to take refuge on a lofty rock; the only accessible side he defended till night-fall, when, lowering himself and followers by a rope, he brought his party off without the loss of a man.

Of those daring adventurers, one, distinguished for enterprise and talent above the rest, had hastened to assist in the defence of Ciudad Rodrigo; and in Julian Sanchez, Herrasti found an able auxiliary, and one whose spirit was congenial to his own. Sanchez was a man of humble birth, and previous to the invasion of the French, cultivated a farm on the banks of the Guebra. One of the atrocities, too common at the time, however, changed the husbandman into the soldier. His parents and sister had been murdered by some French foragers, and Julian swore eternal vengeance, and headed a guerilla band.

On the 25th, the French batteries, armed with forty-six pieces of siege artillery, opened and maintained an unabated fire until the evening of the 28th, when the breach being twenty-five yards long, and deemed practicable, Ney sent in a summons, desiring Herrasti to choose

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"between an honorable capitulation, and the terrible vengeance of a victorious army;" but the old governor returned a firm refusal.

During these occurrences, no general was ever more painfully circumstanced than Lord Wellington. The salvos from Massena's guns sounded in the British camp, and the musketry was heard distinctly at the outposts. The city held nobly out. The spirit of the Catalans pervaded the inhabitants of Rodrigo; and sexual weakness and bodily infirmity were forgotten, when duty made a call. To succour the besieged was, with Lord Wellington, the object next his heart. One march would bring him to the city—and all expected that the attempt would be made. "The troops desired the enterprise—the Spaniard demanded it as a proof of good faith—the Portuguese to keep the war away from their own country." Romana came specially from Badajoz to urge its necessity, and offer his co-operation. Massena, in his proclamations, taxed his opponent with timidity, and accused him of breach of honour and good faith, in allowing his ally's fortress to fall, "without risking a shot to save them." Nothing, however, could shake the determination of the English general. Stern in his purpose, Wellington remained inflexible; and to his resolution not to stand the issue of a battle, the downfall of Napoleon's dynasty may be traced. Lord Wellington's reasons for declining to take part in this defence were communicated to Lord Liverpool in a despatch, dated July 1, 1810, and appear to have been considered perfectly satisfactory.

The fate of Rodrigo was sealed; but the city held out until the 11th, when the counterescarp having been blown in, and a breach formed, over which carriages might have passed, and the French columns formed, and only awaiting the signal to assault, Herrasti hoisted the white flag and surrendered.

During the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo the country between the Azava and the Coa was covered and protected by the British army, under General Craufurd, who in utter disregard of his orders, brought on an action on the Coa, which neither was nor could be productive of advantage. This action was fought on the 24th of July, and is said to

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have terminated in a loss to the enemy of 1000 men killed, and to the allies of 320. With this affair the invasion of Portugal may be said to have been opened. It did not, however, retard the investment of Almeida for a single day; Massena had boasted that in three months he would drive the English into the sea, but he was nearly a month inactive on the banks of the Coa before he commenced his operations against Almeida. On the 15th of August he began to invest that place; what his next step would be appeared to be uncertain. In Ciudad Rodrigo he was already provided with a place of arms, and was known to have collected there large stores of provisions. His army was vastly superior in numbers to that of the Allies, and in cavalry he had greatly the advantage over it; the latter had therefore only to wait for and to watch the movements of their adversaries. On the 4th of August the British general issued his memorable proclamation, calling upon the inhabitants of that portion of the country which it was not in his power to protect, to evacuate their homes, to remove their goods, drive away their cattle, and destroy all stores and provisions they were unable to carry with them. It was further intimated that those who disregarded this order would be punished as traitors. This peremptory proclamation had been rendered necessary by the credulity of those who, having trusted to the promises of Massena, had to lament their credulity amid scenes of plunder, violation, and blood.

CHAPTER IX

ALMEIDA was a regularly constructed fortress, with a garrison of 4000 Portuguese. Colonel Cox, an Englishman, was its governor. It was well provided, and was expected to hold out for a considerable time. It was not until the 25th that the French opened their fire, from sixty-five pieces of cannon. The same evening, a shell falling on some ammunition at the door, set fire to the great powder magazine, which exploded,

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throwing down everything around it, and killing and wounding hundreds of the inhabitants. The besiegers were not in a condition to profit on the instant by this accident, but demanded the next day the immediate surrender of the place. Colonel Cox, deprived of his ammunition, and betrayed by the Lieutenant-Governor, who had acquainted the French with the exact condition of the fortress, and who afterwards deserted to Massena, was compelled to capitulate; stipulating only that the regular troops should be prisoners of war, the militia being allowed to return home, and serve no more. These terms were fulfilled with Massena's accustomed good faith. He forcibly detained the militia-men, and employed them as pioneers; and the regulars he compelled to enrol themselves in his ranks, placing them under the command of the Marques de Alorna, a Portuguese renegade. Eventually they nearly all returned to the allied army, and were received without reproach.

The fall of Almeida was a heavy blow and great discouragement to the British General-in-Chief, following as it did so rapidly the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, whilst it gave a corresponding prestige to the already over-rated power of the enemy.

Meantime the crisis of the campaign was approaching. Massena moved on Viseu, and Wellington retired by the left bank of the Mondego, and, fixing his cavalry at Celerico, established his head-quarters at Gouvea. On the 22nd the French concentrated their forces at the former place. The designs of Massena were soon ascertained. His movements were evidently directed on Coimbra by the north of the Mondego, towards the heights of Busaco or Murella.

The Sierra de Busaco is a high ridge, which extends from the Mondego, in a northerly direction, about eight miles. At the highest point of the ridge, about two miles from its termination, is the convent and garden of Busaco. The Sierra de Busaco is connected by a mountainous tract of country with the Sierra de Caramula, which extends in a north-easterly direction beyond Viseu, and separates the valley of the Mondego from the valley of the Douro. On the left of the Mondego, nearly in a line

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with the Sierra de Busaco, is another ridge of the same description, called the Sierra de Murcella, covered by the river Alva, and connected by other mountainous parts with the Sierra d'Estrella. All the roads to Coimbra, from the eastward, lead over the one or other of these sierras. They are very difficult for the passage of an army, the approaches to the top of the ridge on both sides being mountainous.

Massena's advance being now certain, and Reynier's corps, which had been opposite to that of Hill, in the valley of the Tagus, having moved rapidly towards the Mondego, obliged Hill to cross the river at Villa Velha, and unite himself with Wellington by the defile of Espinosa. On the 23rd, the French passed the Criz in force, having repaired the bridges which Pack had destroyed on the preceding day; and the British leisurely retired. On the 24th, some smart skirmishing took place between the British pickets and the French light troops, which, being repeated on the 25th, had nearly brought on a very serious affair. Disregarding the rapid advance of the enemy in overpowering numbers, Craufurd obstinately maintained the position he had taken up in the morning with the Light Division. The French cavalry were swarming round on every side, and their heavy columns of infantry marching at their best pace, with the evident design of cutting him off; but still the British general refused to give ground. "The cavalry skirmishers were already exchanging pistol-shots, when Lord Wellington suddenly arriving, ordered the division to retire, and, taking the personal direction, covered the retreat with the 52nd and 95th, the cavalry, and Ross's troop of horse artillery." Although the French came up rapidly, the Light Division was steadily withdrawn; and it crowned the ridge of Busaco, as the immense masses of the enemy displayed their imposing numbers upon the opposite heights.

The French numbered nearly 70,000 combatants, commanded by three marshals of France, one of them of great and deserved renown. The British force, consisting of 25,000 men, lay upon the backward slope of the sierra, by the rocky ridge of which their disposition and numbers were concealed. At two o'clock on the morning

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of the 27th, the sentinels, on their picquet posts, could hear the stir of preparation in the French camp, and the British line stood silently to arms in the order of battle. Hill occupied the right, Leith the left, and the Lusitanian Legion was in reserve; next in order stood the third division, under Picton. The first was formed near the convent, with the brigade of Pack posted considerably in advance on the descent. The light division was formed on the left of Pack. At some distance from their post was placed a brigade of German cavalry, exposed to the full view of the enemy, and apparently the only body opposed to them. The fourth division, under Cole, held the left of the ridge. The British cavalry were drawn up in reserve. Whilst the French were waiting for Massena, who was ten miles in the rear, the British army had, with full deliberation, taken its ground, and this delay sealed, in all probability, the fortunes of the day.

The French attack was made in five columns, and on two distinct points, about a league apart from each other. Reynier, with two columns, mounted the hill at Antonio de Cantara; and Ney, with three, in front of the convent of Busaco. Reynier had fewer difficulties to overcome, as the face of the sierra by which he advanced was more practicable; and, favoured by the mist, his skirmishers were mingled with the light troops of the third division, almost as soon as the pickets had discovered that the enemy were in motion. The Allies resisted vigorously, and the British artillery swept the face of the sierra with a destructive storm of grape; but the French pressed forward, forced the right of the division back, threw a Portuguese regiment into disorder, and gained the crest of the ridge between Picton's and Leith's divisions. The enemy instantly endeavoured to secure the height they had won with their advanced battalions, and, with the remainder of the corps, pressed rapidly along the ridge of the hill. But in front, volleys of musketry checked them—their flank was torn by the fire of the British guns—while the 45th and 88th came forward with the bayonet and, charging furiously all before them, forced the shattered column down the hill; “the dead and dying strewing the way even to the bottom of the valley.”

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Reynier's leading regiments still held the summit of the height; and, shrouded in the haze and partially unseen, they re-formed their ranks, while the third division was driving the rest of the column from the mountain. They had not, however, escaped the observation of General Leith, and he instantly advanced with his first brigade to the assistance of Picton. The 38th regiment was ordered to turn the right of the French; but, as that flank of the enemy rested upon a precipice on the reverse of the sierra, it was impossible to effect it. Colonel Cameron saw the emergency, and deploying the 9th regiment into line under a furious fire, he charged in among the rocks, forced the French with the bayonet from the crest, and secured it with his regiment from any second effort which the enemy might make to win it back. All now went well;—"Hill's corps edged in towards the scene of action; the second brigade of Leith joined the first, and a great mass of fresh troops were thus concentrated, while Reynier had neither reserves nor guns to restore the fight."

The greater difficulty of the ground rendered Ney's attacks still less successful, even for a time, than Reynier's had proved. Craufurd's disposition of the Light Division was masterly. Under a dipping of the ground between the convent and plateau, the 43rd and 52nd were formed in line; while higher up the hill, and closer to the convent the Germans were drawn up. The rocks in front formed a natural battery for the guns; and the whole face of the sierra was crowded with riflemen and Caçadores. As morning dawned, a sharp and scattered musketry was heard among the broken hollows of the valley that separated the rival armies, and immediately the French presented themselves in three divisions; Loison's mounting the face of the sierra, Marchand's inclining leftwards, as if intending to turn the right flank of the left division, and the third remaining in reserve.

The brigade of General Simon led the attack; and, reckless of the constant fusillade of the British light troops and the incessant fire of the artillery, which literally ploughed through the advancing column from its leading to its last section, the enemy came steadily and quickly on. The horse-artillery worked their guns with amazing

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rapidity—delivering round after round with such beautiful precision, that the wonder was, how any body of men could advance under such a withering and incessant cannonade. But nothing could surpass the gallantry of the assailants. On they came—and, in a few moments, their skirmishers, “breathless, and begrimed with powder,” gained the ridge of the sierra. The British guns were instantly retired—the French cheers arose—and, in another second, their column topped the height. General Craufurd, who had coolly watched the progress of the advance, called on the 43rd and 52nd to “Charge !” A cheer that pealed for miles over the sierra answered the order, and “eighteen hundred British bayonets went sparkling over the brow of the hill.” The head of the French column was overwhelmed in an instant; “both its flanks were lapped over by the English wings,” while volley after volley, at a few yards distance, completed its destruction, and marked with hundreds of its dead and dying, all down the face of the sierra, the course of its murderous discomfiture. Some of the light troops continued slaughtering the broken columns nearly to the bottom of the hill, until Ney’s guns opened from the opposite side, and covered the escape of the relics of Simon’s division.

When Simon’s attack was finally repulsed, Marchand’s brigade had gained a wood halfway up the sierra, and threatened the centre of the position. But they never advanced beyond the cover of the pine-trees—Pack’s Portuguese regiment held them firmly in check, the Guards showed themselves in force on the crest of the height, while Craufurd, now disengaged, turned a searching fire from his guns upon their flank. Ney in person sustained this hopeless contest for an hour, and then retired in despair, leaving the British position as unassailable as it had been previous to the general attack.

The English Commander permitted the French to remove their wounded. But the cessation from fighting was soon interrupted. Some French troops persisted in holding a village within pistol-shot of the Light Division, and were not satisfied until Craufurd had killed one-half of them and expelled the rest.

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The loss of life at Busaco, as might have been expected from the obstinacy with which the enemy continued its gallant and unavailing efforts, was most severe; but the casualties of the French and Allied armies, relatively, bore no proportion. The strength of his position, and his being enabled to employ artillery with terrible effect, gave to the British General an advantage, of which he amply availed himself. Hence, of the enemy, 6,000 put *hors de combat* cannot be over the amount. Of this number, about 300, including General Simon, three colonels, and thirty-three inferior officers, were made prisoners; and nearly 2,000—for as the English buried the slain, they could form on this point a correct estimate—were left dead upon the battle-ground. Among the killed was the French general Graindorge; and three generals of division, Merle, Loison, and Macune, were wounded. The entire of the casualties sustained by the Allies amounted to 1269, of whom 74 were officers of all ranks. The conduct of the Portuguese in this battle was admirable, and was worthy of their ancient fame. By their behaviour they inspired not only their commanders with confidence, but confidence in themselves. To Lord Beresford, who had had so large a share in bringing them to the state of discipline which they displayed on that occasion, the praise bestowed upon them was in the highest degree encouraging. It also taught the invaders that, next to British soldiers, troops taught and disciplined by British soldiers were most to be dreaded; and that what Napoleon termed the *canaille* were not so destitute of military prowess and capacity as he seems to have imagined.

Of course, Massena made no attempt to renew his attack on the formidable position of Busaco. Towards evening, he put several columns in motion to his right; and it was ascertained before midnight that the whole army was on march to turn the British left. This flank march offered a tempting opportunity to the British general; but he wisely declined to become the assailant, being perfectly satisfied with his day's work. He felt secure that his lines at Torres Vedras would effect all that they were designed to effect, and that the further the French

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were drawn into the country, the more disastrous would be their retreat.

The position of Busaco was evacuated on the 29th, when Hill's corps retired towards Espinal and Thomar; whilst the main body of the allied army took the road to Coimbra, where it crossed the Mondego on the 1st of October, a strong advanced guard of the enemy having appeared before that city on the previous day. The retreat was then continued by the routes of Louisa and Pombal to Leiria.

Massena, finding Coimbra abandoned to him without a struggle, made a halt there for three days, and allowed his soldiers their accustomed impunity. He then pursued his march, leaving 5000 sick and wounded behind him, with a company of marines of the Imperial Guard to protect them. But ere his back was well turned, Colonel Trant appeared before Coimbra with a body of Portuguese militia, and captured the whole of the French hospitals, together with the soldiers left to protect them. Other bodies of the same force harassed the enemy's rear. By these troops every town which the French evacuated was taken possession of.

Massena pressed forward, in the hope of intercepting the passage of the British troops to the sea. An easy success and rich reward appeared to be within his grasp. His surprise and disappointment, therefore, may be conceived when, on the 10th of October, after his advanced guard had driven the Allies from Sobral, his eye rested on the mighty and impregnable fortress which barred his further advance; and he ascertained the stupendous fact, that a strong defensive position, thirty miles in extent, flanked by the Tagus on its right, and the Atlantic on its left, and armed with perfect military science, with lavish expense and incredible labour, spread its menacing front before him.

CHAPTER X

SOULT now prepared to besiege Badajoz, which though well garrisoned, was ill provided with provisions. Mendizabal, with 10,000 Spanish troops, was at hand to

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interrupt the enemy's operations, maintain a communication with the place, and generally assist the besieged. The post assigned to him was the heights of San Cristoval behind the Gevora, which, though not naturally strong, were capable of being rendered impregnable; and being held, would have prevented Soult from obtaining possession of Badajoz; Mendizabal, however, neglected to intrench his position; and allowing himself to be surprised by Soult and Mortier, was completely routed, and the garrison, thanks to the treachery or cowardice of the governor, surrendered to the enemy. This disaster added to the new difficulties of Lord Wellington, who only awaited the arrival of a reinforcement from England to detach such a force to Badajoz as would with Mendizabal's corps, have defeated Soult, and relieved that fortress. To detach the requisite force was now out of the question; and seeing that a bold stroke would alone save the fortress, Wellington resolved to fall upon Massena the moment his expected reinforcement should arrive. Lord Wellington was now in full pursuit of Massena, and on the 13th of March, 1811, came up with the French army at Ponte Ciberta, and had well-nigh captured Massena himself. By the disobedience of one of his officers, who led on a pursuit against his directions, an engagement was precipitated which completely defeated his plans. After a sharp skirmish Ney drew off, and Wellington had by his vigorous and skillful movements confined the army of Massena to one narrow line of retreat between the mountains and the river Mondego. Ney, who covered the movements of the main body with a strong rear-guard, had halted upon the left bank of the Ceira in a defensible position near the village of Fons d'Aronce. Here Lord Wellington came up with him, and making a feint upon his right, vigorously charged his left with the 3rd division, whilst a battery of horse-artillery being advanced rapidly to a favourable point, drove his dismayed battalions into the river in such confusion that many were drowned, and many trampled to death on the bridge. In this affair the French lost 500 men, whilst the casualties on our side were quite trifling. Ney blew up the bridge and retired, and on the 16th the entire body of the enemy had passed

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the Alva, and occupied the line of mountain beyond that river. So soon as he heard of the infamous surrender of Badajoz, Lord Wellington resolved to reinforce the corps of Beresford, which he had already halted at Thomar, as he desired that he should take instant measures for the recovery of that fortress. On the night of the 16th, a temporary bridge having been thrown over the Ceira, he marched onwards in pursuit. Massena attempted to concentrate his troops on the Sierra de Morta, but was soon forced from it by the manœuvres of his antagonist. Two divisions of the Allies passed the Alva by a flying bridge, and threatened Massena by Argani : and upon the north bank of the Mondego a body of militia, under Trant and Wilson, harassed his flank. Thus pressed, he again destroyed all the stores and baggage that impeded his march, and hastened on to Celerico and Guarda. He arrived at the former post on the 21st. Regnier, with the second corps, had occupied Guarda. Massena hoped to keep his ground long enough to enable him to avoid the mortification of a forced retreat into Spain. The pursuing army had outmarched its supplies, and was subjected to great privations, the means of transport being inadequate to the rapidity of its march, and a short pause became inevitable, which led Massena to infer that the pursuit was at an end, and to make sure dispositions under that impression. Meanwhile Massena and Ney had quarrelled, and the Commander-in-Chief superseded Ney, and sent him to Paris.

Massena's hope of being able to maintain himself in Portugal until he could resume the offensive, was defeated by the sudden appearance, on the 20th of March, of five columns of attack ascending the Guarda mountain by five different routes. Abandoning their position, strong as it was, the French hurried down the only open road, and crossed the Coa. Upon this river they halted until the 3rd of April; at daylight on that day Lord Wellington manœuvred to turn Massena's left wing, and by an active and well-combined movement, to envelop and cut it off. An error in the calculation led Colonel Beckworth to the attack before the other troops were in motion, and thus occasioned a severe and unnecessary loss; for when the

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fog cleared away, that gallant officer found himself in the middle of Reynier's force, exposed to a fire of grape only a hundred yards off, and assailed in front and upon both flanks by numerous forces, some of them cavalry. He succeeded, nevertheless, in repulsing the enemy with a loss of 800 men, his own loss, however, being 200 men *hors de combat*. There was, perhaps, no part of the career of Wellington in which his military genius was more advantageously displayed than in his masterly combinations for the defence of Portugal, and the expulsion of her invaders. Portugal was the fulcrum on which the fate of England lay balanced; for had the British troops been driven to evacuate that country, we should soon have had to repel invasion by our own hearthstones.

One of the most remarkable characteristics of the French commanders was the ease and expedition with which they seemed to repair the disasters they had incurred. In less than a month the scattered army of Massena was re-organized, and he was once more in the field, at the head of 40,000 infantry and 4000 horse. To this force the Allies could only oppose 1500 horse and 32,000 infantry. Wellington no sooner heard of the re-appearance of so formidable an army, than he returned from the south, and reached Villa Formosa on the 28th of April. With new means and appliances at his command, it was to be expected that Massena's first attention would be devoted to the relief of Almeida, his only acquisition of any importance during his long and disastrous campaign. Lord Wellington could not consent to see this fortress relieved; and although both the ground and circumstances were unfavourable, he considered that the time had arrived when he should accept the invader's challenge, and give him battle.

On the 3rd of May the enemy appeared on the opposite bank of the Duas Casas, menacing Almeida with their right, and Fuentes d'Onor with their left. Towards evening, under cover of a hot cannonade from the ridge of their position, they made a vigorous assault upon the village. The lower ground was defended manfully, but the fire became so fierce that the British were compelled to withdraw to the upper; and, but for a timely reinforce-

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ment, would have been unable to hold the post. The French supplied the assailants with reinforcements, but the 71st, 79th, and 24th regiments struggled so nobly, that they recovered every inch of ground that had been lost, and drove the enemy not only out of the village, but across the river. The light companies were withdrawn after sunset, and the village was held through the night by the regiments already enumerated, under the command of Colonel Cameron, of the 79th.

On the following day, Massena, foiled at all points, contented himself with making a reconnaissance, and both armies remained *in statu quo*. Anticipating Massena's object, and anxious to secure the communication with Sabugal, Lord Wellington moved Houston's division, on the evening of the 4th, from the rear of Fuentes, and posted it behind the hamlet of Pozo Velho, in an open wood, midway between Fuentes and Nava de Aver. As early as three on the morning of the 5th, the enemy's columns were in motion to their left, and the entire corps of Junot with the whole of the French cavalry, were assembled in front of the wood of Pozo Velho. The Light Division, under Craufurd, and a troop of horse-artillery, were sent to support Houston, and the divisions of Picton and Spencer were moved a little to the right. The action began with an attack on the 7th division in the village of Pozo Velho, which was partially successful. The French cavalry, under Montbrun, then passed that place, and Julian Sanchez, taking alarm, hastily withdrew his guerillas from Nava de Aver, and retired across the Turones, and the 7th division having been thus left uncovered, was speedily turned by Montbrun's horse. A body of British cavalry attempted to check his further advance, but was compelled to retire, and the troop of horse-artillery, commanded by Captain Ramsay, became surrounded; but that officer, trusting to his fine cattle and stalwart gunners, broke away through their astonished squadrons, and gaining the allied line, unlimbered, and poured a fire into the enemy that completely astounded them. Meanwhile, the 7th and light divisions had been compelled to fall back. This temporary success on the part of Massena compelled Lord Wellington to change his

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position, and relinquish the communication with Sabugal; and the 7th division was moved across the Turones to Frenada, whence his new line extended to Fuentes d'Onor. His left still rested on the Duas Casas, and Fuentes was still held. To execute these movements, the 7th and light divisions had to retire for nearly two miles, in the face of a large body of cavalry, which, by its uncommon activity and gallantry, scarcely left the division of General Houston time for the formation of their squares. Misapprehending the object of this movement, the enemy regarded it, in the first instance, as a retreat, and pressed on with all the confidence of victors. They, however, soon discovered their mistake.

During this struggle on the right, the village of Fuentes d'Onor had become the scene of a fierce and bloody struggle; so desperate, indeed, as to leave it for some time doubtful which force would be in the ascendant. At one time the French had actually penetrated beyond the village, and had attempted to assail the plateau, but were immediately attacked and driven back into the streets by the 74th, 83rd, and 88th regiments. Both sides were strongly reinforced, and the contest was continued with unflinching constancy until the evening, when the French withdrew.

In calmly reviewing the varied fortunes of this long and sanguinary conflict, it is impossible, in weighing the merits of those commanding, not to award an immeasurable superiority to the talents of the British general. Obligated to abide a battle, and that too upon a field in no way favourable for an inferior force to sustain the assault of a superior enemy, Wellington's dispositions were masterly, and every arm he had was ably and usefully employed. Massena, on the other hand, displayed none of that military genius which had placed him foremost among Napoleon's lieutenants. He wasted his strength upon the village of Fuentes d'Onor; and with the key of the position in his possession, he allowed this advantage to remain profitless, when through Pozo Velho he could have poured his whole force upon the plateau, and overwhelmed the British right wing by mere numbers.

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CHAPTER XI

On the 14th the main body of the Allies moved upon Valverde, where it was concerted between Beresford and the Spanish generals that they should unite their forces at Albuera, and offer battle. By the activity and admirable arrangements of Lord Beresford, the siege-artillery and stores were safely passed over the Guadiana, and the flying bridge withdrawn.

On the same evening Lord Wellington had left Villa Formosa, accompanied by a part of his staff, and, travelling without baggage or impediments of any description, arrived at Elvas before dark on the 19th. Various conflicting rumours had reached him on the way, some of which were sufficiently discouraging, but on arriving at Elvas he had the satisfaction of receiving an account of one of the most obstinate and sanguinary actions in which British troops had ever been engaged, the battle of Albuera.

Never did the *matériel* and discipline of an army more completely compensate for its inferiority in numbers than that of the Duke of Dalmatia on this occasion. His corps was composed of the very *élite* of Napoleon's army. Though his infantry was weaker by 8000 or 10,000 than our own, they were all picked men. His cavalry was a third stronger, and his artillery more numerous and efficient. Beresford's force was a motley of three nations; he had 30,000 men in position, but not a fourth were British, and nearly one-half were Spaniards; nor were the latter brought up in time to be properly posted. Blake promised that his corps should be on the hill of Albuera before noon on the 15th; and with but a few miles to march, and excellent roads, his vanguard did not arrive on the field until midnight, whilst his rear did not present itself until three o'clock on the morning of the 16th. Three fine Portuguese regiments never made their appearance at all!

The village of Albuera is a street of mean houses, with a church, situated on a little river, from which it is named. This village is traversed by the high road leading from Seville to Badajoz; which, about two hundred yards to

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the right, crosses the river by a handsome bridge of stone. Immediately to the left of Albuera, and just below the rough and rising ground on which it stands, there is another bridge, of unhewn stone, old, narrow, and incommodious. The river, in summer, is not above knee-deep. Its banks, to the left of the old bridge, and directly in front of the village, are very abrupt and difficult; but to the right of the main bridge the passage of the stream is easy for all arms.

After a careful reconnaissance on the evening of the 15th, the Duke of Dalmatia selected the right of the Allies as the object for his greatest effort. Favoured by the darkness, he lodged Girard's corps, Ruty's artillery, and the cavalry of Latour Maubourg, in the wood; and when morning broke, a powerful force was already formed in close column, and perfectly concealed, though within ten minutes march of the Spanish line.

The enemy, on the morning of the 16th, did not long delay his attack. At eight o'clock he was observed to be in movement, and his cavalry was seen passing the rivulet of Albuera, considerably above our right; and shortly after, he marched out of the wood opposite to us a strong force of cavalry and two heavy columns of infantry, pointing them to our front, as if to attack the village and bridge of Albuera. During this time, under cover of his vastly superior cavalry, he was filing the principal body of his infantry over the river beyond our right; and it was not long before his intention appeared to be to turn us by that flank, and to cut us off from Valverde.

On perceiving that the right was seriously menaced, Beresford had sent Colonel Hardinge to request that Blake would change his front. But the Spanish general doggedly insisted that the village was the true object of attack, and refused to correct his alignment. The marshal rode in person to the right; and as the French columns were now observed in rapid march, yielding to this evidence, Blake proceeded to make the evolution, yet with such pedantic slowness that Beresford, impatient of his folly, took the direction himself.

But before the change could be effected, the day might have been considered by Beresford as lost. "Two-thirds

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of the French were in compact order of battle on a line perpendicular to his right, and his army, disordered and composed of different nations, was still in the difficult act of changing its front. It was in vain that he endeavoured to form the Spanish line sufficiently in advance to give room for the 2nd division to support it; the French guns opened, their infantry threw out a heavy musketry, and their cavalry, outflanking the front, and charging here and there, put the Spaniards in disorder at all points; in a short time the latter gave way, and Soult, thinking the whole army was yielding, pushed forward his columns, while his reserves also mounted the hill, and General Rutly placed all the batteries in position."

Seeing the desperate state of affairs, General William Stewart bravely, but rashly, endeavoured to restore the battle; and pushing his brigade up the hill, he mounted, for greater dispatch, by columns of companies. But as the regiments were endeavouring to open into line, each as it crowned the ridge in the loose order in which it had advanced, the French light cavalry, under cover of a heavy shower of rain, passed round the right flank of the brigade, and came in a thundering onset direct upon their rear. A sad slaughter ensued; and every regiment, except the 31st, which fortunately had not begun to deploy, was literally cut to pieces. The lancers galloped right and left, spearing men without mercy who could neither escape nor, from confusion and surprise, offer an effective resistance; while the Spaniards, regardless that their fire was falling fast upon the English ranks, kept up an unabating fusillade—but when ordered to advance, and succour men who were perishing through the brave but rash celerity with which they had rushed to their assistance, no power could move them forward. Happily the weather cleared; and the distressed brigade was observed by General Lumley, who rode at speed to the rescue. The British cavalry charged nobly. In turn, the lancers were taken in the rear; and numbers of these desperadoes fell beneath the sabres of the English horsemen.

The mist which had favoured this sanguinary charge, averted also, in a great degree, the fatal consequences it

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must have otherwise produced. Soult, from the obscurity of the weather, could not see the battle-field with sufficient clearness to allow him to push forward his infantry, and consummate the destruction of a brigade already half exterminated. The 31st regiment steadily maintained its ground—the British artillery came up—Houghton's brigade cleared the hill, and deployed in beautiful order—two Spanish regiments were brought forward, and the battle was restored.

Though for a moment checked, the French soon renewed their efforts to break the English line; but the British regiments stood with a stubborn gallantry that refused to yield an inch. On both sides, the batteries poured torrents of grape at half range, and the roar of musketry was incessant. Upon the close formation of the French, the storm descended with terrible violence—whole sections fell; but still these noble soldiers remained unshaken by this crushing fire; and their reserves were coming rapidly up. A column appeared already moving round the right flank of the British; ammunition failed—their fusillade gradually became feebler—the lancers charged again, and a battery was taken. That moment was the crisis. To retreat, was Beresford's first thought; orders were being issued to commence it, when Colonel Hardinge saw that the battle might yet be won—and, without having obtained the marshal's permission, he ordered the 4th division and a brigade of the 2nd to advance, and thus redeemed the fortunes of a day which all besides thought desperate.

“In a few minutes more the remnant of the British must have abandoned the hill, or perished. The French reserve was on its march to assist the front column of the enemy, while with the Allies all was in confusion; and, as if the slaughter required increase, a Spanish and English regiment were firing in mutual error upon each other. Six guns were in possession of the French, and their lancers, riding furiously over the field, threatened the feeble remnant of the British still in line, and speared the wounded without mercy. At this fearful moment the boundless gallantry of British officers displayed itself; Colonel Arbuthnot, under the double musketry, rushed

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between the mistaken regiments, and stopped the firing; Cole pushed up the hill, scattered the lancers, recovered the guns, and passed the right of the skeleton of Houghton's brigade, at the same instant that Abercrombie appeared upon its left. Leaving the broken regiments in its rear, the fusileer brigade came forward with imposing gallantry, and boldly confronted the French, now reinforced by a part of its reserve, and who were, as they believed, coming forward to annihilate the few that had still survived the murderous contest. From the daring attitude of the fresh regiments, Soult perceived too late that the battle was not yet won; and, under a tremendous fire of artillery, he endeavoured to break up his close formation and open out his front. For a moment the storm of grape poured from Rutly's well-served artillery staggered the fusileers; but it was only for a moment. Though Soult rushed into the thickest of the fire, and encouraged and animated his men,—though the cavalry gathered on their flank, and threatened it with destruction—on went those noble regiments; volley after volley falling into the crowded ranks of their enemy, and cheer after cheer pealing to heaven, in answer to the clamorous outcry of the French, as the boldest urged the others forward.

“Nothing could check the fusileers; they kept gradually advancing, while the incessant rolling of their musketry slaughtered the crowded sections of the French, and each moment embarrassed more and more Soult's efforts to open out his encumbered line. The enemy's reserve coming forward to support their comrades, was forced to the very edge of the plateau, and increased the crowd without remedying the disorder. The English volleys rolled on faster and more deadly than ever—a horrid carnage making all attempts to hold the hill vain, and thus uselessly increasing an unavailing slaughter. Unable to bear the withering fire, the shattered columns of the French were no longer able to sustain themselves,—the masses were driven over the ridge—and trampling each other down, the shattered column sought refuge at the bottom of the hill.

“On that bloody height stood the conquerors. From

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1500 muskets a parting volley fell upon the routed column as it hurried down the height. Where was the remainder of the proud array of England, which on that morning had exceeded 6000 combatants?—Stretched coldly in the sleep of death, or bleeding on the battle-ground!”

Thus terminated one of the bloodiest conflicts upon record; for Godinot, perceiving that Latour-Maubourg was repulsed by Lefebvre's guns and a threatened charge from Lumley's cavalry, abandoned his efforts against the left, and drew back from the village of Albueira. At nine o'clock the conflict commenced—at two it closed; and the French, under a heavy fire of artillery, retired their beaten infantry across the river, and left the field of battle to the conquerors.

This battle was pronounced by Lord Wellington to be “one of the most glorious and honourable to the character of the British troops of any that had been fought during the war.” This triumph, however splendid it was, was dearly purchased by the Allies—their loss in killed and wounded amounting to 3500 men out of 7000. The Spaniards lost 2000; the Portuguese, 400; the Germans, 120. The enemy had two generals of division killed and five wounded; and their loss was 9500 men. Both armies claimed a victory; but the title rested indubitably with the Allies. Soult was master of a howitzer, some stand of colours, and 500 prisoners, of whom the greater proportion rejoined their regiments within a fortnight. Beresford remained upon the battle-field, from which his assailants had been deforced, and his trophies were sad but certain attendants on success—the bodies of the slain, and numbers of maimed unfortunates, too badly wounded to bear removal.

CHAPTER XII

THE siege of Badajoz was now resumed in good earnest. The batteries opened on the 3rd of June. On the 6th, San Christoval was assaulted, without success. On the 9th, two breaches having been declared practicable, the

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attempt was resumed with no better fortune. Ensign Dyas again led the service, and the storming party arrived at the foot of the breach; but they found it impossible to mount it, the enemy having again cleared the rubbish from the bottom of the escarp. The detachment suffered considerably, and Major M'Geehy, the commanding officer, was unfortunately killed, and others of the officers fell; but the troops continued to maintain their station till Major-General Houston ordered them to retire.

Every one who succeeded in reaching the parapet was instantly bayoneted down; and the garrison, after a little while, mounting on the parapet, upset the ladders. At this time the two assaulting columns were completely mixed together, and united in many strenuous endeavours to replace the ladders at various points of the front; but the enormous quantity of large shells, hand-grenades, bags of powder, and combustibles, which the garrison threw into the ditch, rendered their perseverance and gallantry unavailing; and after braving destruction till 10 P.M., and having 40 men killed and 100 wounded, the remainder of the assaulting party was ordered to retire.

So wretched was the ordnance employed on this occasion, that eighteen brass guns were disabled by their own fire; and, although an incessant storm was kept up from the 2nd to the 10th instant, from fourteen 24-pounders, on a wall constructed of rammed earth and loosed stones, it had not effected a practicable breach. The interception of a despatch from the Duke of Dalmatia to the Duke of Ragusa, which pointed out clearly the enemy's design to assemble in Estremadura their whole force, rendered it imperative that the siege should be raised. Had the siege been continued for two days longer, Elvas would have been left bare of ammunition, and with regard to provisions, its garrison had not supplies left for a fortnight. Although the siege was raised, the blockade continued. Passing over minor operations, we may mention that the combined force under Marmont and Soult mustered 62,000 infantry and 8000 horse, while that of Wellington did not exceed 55,000, of whom only 3500 were cavalry. In spite of this disparity, he resolved to fight a battle upon the frontier, and with this view, and

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having reached Campo-Mayor, strengthened his position by field-works and batteries.

On the 23rd the French advanced from Tamames, and reconnoitred the British position; and the next day pushed a convoy into Badajoz, protected by four divisions of infantry and 6000 cavalry. On the 25th the English pickets were driven in, across the Azava, whilst, crossing the Agueda in great force, Montbrun moved directly on Guinaldo, and turned the heights on which Picton's division had been posted.

On the morning of the 25th of September the French advanced upon the position of El Bodon with thirty squadrons of horse, and a heavy column of infantry. On the left, and in advance of El Bodon, were posted the 5th and 77th regiments, mustering between them not more than 700 bayonets. The height on which they were drawn up commanded the road from Ciudad Rodrigo to Guinaldo, by which the enemy were advancing. Upon its crest, in front of the two battalions, was a brigade of Portuguese artillery, supported by a few troops of the 1st German Hussars, and the 11th Light Dragoons. A ravine ran in front of this Portuguese battery within point-blank distance; the ground on the heights, and on the face of the ascent, was rugged, but nevertheless practicable for horse. Montbrun led his cavalry in ardent haste, and came on the position long before the French infantry could reach it. Ten of his squadrons spurred across the ravine, and pressing forward under a heavy and destructive fire of grape and canister from the Portuguese artillery under Arentschild, took the battery, cutting down the Portuguese at their guns. At this moment, the weak battalion of infantry, composed of the remnants of the 5th and 77th regiments, came steadily up to them in line, firing as they advanced. When close up to them, they charged, bayonet in hand, retook the guns, and drove the enemy off, sending a volley after them as they fled. These regiments, or rather skeletons of regiments, taking with them the guns, retired across the open plain, in the presence of all the French cavalry. Montbrun rode furiously at them, his gallant cavalry attacking three sides of their square, but was again and again repulsed. Between each repulse the

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march was resumed; and they retired with the greatest regularity.

Having effected their junction with the 83rd British, and 9th and 21st Portuguese, the retreat was continued, under the command of General Colville, in the finest order. A large body of French dragoons still covered the plain, and during this portion of the operations, Lord Wellington had a narrow escape from being captured, in the confusion occasioned by the perplexing resemblance of the English and French cavalry uniforms. The right brigade of the 3rd division, composed of the 45th, 74th, and 88th, had a more protected line of retreat, much of its road lying among vineyards and open ground, but having cleared these covers, it came out upon a wide open flat, and had to march six miles, accompanied the whole way by the enemy's cavalry. General Picton conducted his division on this trying occasion with the imperturbable courage which was his character in the field. The left wing of the army was by this time concentrated at Nav: de Aver, and Lord Wellington would have retired to a position previously selected on the Coa, had he not been compelled to await the arrival of the Light Division, under Craufurd, which had taken a circuitous route, to keep clear of the enemy. When Picton's division reached Guinaldo, it was halted, and the enemy took up ground in front. The position of the British was a lofty ridge. The Agueda flowed past the right; the left was about three miles from the right, and was bounded by the extremity of the ridge, which there terminated abruptly. Only two divisions occupied this position—those of Picton and Cole. Lord Wellington's temporary object had been gained; the whole French army had been brought forward and shown, and was in front. He now issued orders for the troops to retire further, to a battle-position of great strength, already selected on the Coa. But his intention was frustrated by the non-arrival of General Craufurd, who did not receive his order in time.

On the morning of the 26th, Marmont assembled 35,000 infantry, including twenty-two battalions of the Imperial Guard, and his numerous and superb cavalry, in front of the position. Lord Wellington formed his own weak

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divisions for battle, and determined to stand fast; whilst the French marshal, in ignorance of his opponent's circumstances, delayed his attack until he had leisurely reviewed his army. Meanwhile the British soldiers piled their arms, and Lord Wellington sat down on the ground, to await the Duke of Ragusa's pleasure! During the valuable time thus lost, the Light Division, under Craufurd, had passed the Agueda, and joined the main army. At night Wellington withdrew the troops, and marched upon Alfarates. Before sunset on the 26th, the infantry of Marmont were augmented to 60,000, with 120 pieces of artillery. On the 27th, two of the French columns attacked the British rear-guard at Aldea-de-Ponte. They carried the village twice, and were twice driven out again by Cole's troops. The same night the Allies entered the position selected on the Coa, near Sabugal, and the next morning Lord Wellington offered the enemy battle. Marmont, however, declined the challenge, and retired. Count Dorsenne returned to the north; the Army of Portugal moved a part to Salamanca, and a part, by the Puerto de Banos, to the valley of the Tagus. The Allies now went into good cantonments, and headquarters were fixed for a season at Frenada.

CHAPTER XIII

LORD WELLINGTON had been long contemplating an attack on Ciudad Rodrigo. A close blockade, in consequence of the exhausted state of the neighbouring country, was consequently decided on. The first preliminary step was to put Almeida in a state of defence; and within its walls were deposited the battering-train and stores brought up the Douro, which had been rendered navigable by Lord Wellington as high up as the confluence of the Agueda. Marmont had, fortunately, no idea of the British general's plans, or he would not have allowed him an undisturbed winter to mature them. Under the full impression that he contemplated no movement for some time to come, he had detached three

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divisions of infantry and a body of horse from his own army, into Valencia, and had directed Dorsenne to send two divisions of his corps into the Asturias, against the guerillas of the Montana. He could not, therefore, assemble a force sufficiently strong to interrupt the siege for some weeks.

On the 8th of January the Light Division forded the river at La Caridad, and formed the investment; and the engineers' stores were brought across the Agueda by the bridge, and parked 1800 yards from the fortress. During the day everything was kept as quiet as possible, and an equal examination made of every side of the town, so as to prevent any suspicion of an immediate effort being intended, or betray to the garrison the point about to be attacked.

At eight o'clock that evening the redoubt upon the upper Teson was carried by assault. The affair was gallantly effected by three companies of the 52nd, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Colborne, and conducted by Lieutenant Thomson. The loss was trifling, and the possession of the work was found of immediate value. From the lodgement, a distinct view was obtained of the defences of the place and of the intervening ground, and the commanding engineer was enabled to decide on the best trace for the parallel and the best sites for the batteries, and at dusk he picketed them out.

Intelligence in the meantime had been received that induced Lord Wellington to alter this system of attack. Marmont was collecting his detached divisions, and his avowed object being the relief of the place, Wellington determined to prevent it by storming Rodrigo, without waiting to blow in the counterscarp—"in other words, to overstep the rules of science, and sacrifice life rather than time; for such was the capricious nature of the Agueda, that in one night a flood might enable a small French force to relieve the place."

The sortie, added to the opening and lining of the embrasures, which the death of the acting engineer had embarrassed, delayed the breaching batteries from commencing their fire until half-past four in the afternoon. Then twenty-seven heavy guns opened; they

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were promptly answered by every piece of artillery which the garrison could bring to bear; and the united fire produced an effect more strikingly magnificent than it has been the ordinary good fortune of a British soldier to witness.

"The evening," says Lord Londonderry, "chanced to be remarkably beautiful and still; there was not a cloud in the sky, nor a breath of wind astir, when suddenly the roar of artillery broke in upon its calmness, and volumes of smoke rose slowly from our batteries. These, floating gently towards the town, soon enveloped the lower parts of the hill, and even the ramparts and bastions, in a dense veil; whilst the towers and summits, lifting their heads over the haze, showed like fairy buildings, or those unsubstantial castles which are sometimes seen in the clouds on a summer's day. The flashes from our guns, answered as they promptly were from the artillery in the place, the roar of their thunder reverberating among the remote mountains of the Sierra de Francisca; these, with the rattle of the balls against the masonry, and the occasional crash as portions of the wall gave way, proved, altogether, a scene which, to be rightly understood, must be experienced."

To the 19th, with the usual incidents that attend a siege, the besiegers continued to breach, and the garrison to offer the boldest and most scientific opposition. The irresistible fire of the British guns had gradually ruined that portion of the works against which its violence was directed. The convent of San Francisco had been already taken with little resistance by the 40th regiment, the breaches rendered practicable, and a summons sent to the governor and declined. A personal examination of the breaches confirmed Lord Wellington's previous opinion, that the assault might be given with success; and directing the fire of the breaching batteries to be turned against the guns upon the ramparts, he seated himself upon the reverse of an advanced approach, and wrote out an order of assault to be made at seven o'clock.

The coolness with which, seated on the embankment of a field-work, undisturbed by the roar of his own artillery, or the responding thunder from the batteries of the

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fortress, Lord Wellington penned the plan of the assault, was, indeed, characteristic of the man. That memorandum sealed the fate of Ciudad Rodrigo.

Early in the day the order of attack had been issued by Lord Wellington; and the officers to whom the conduct of the assault was to be entrusted had thus ample time allowed them to become perfectly apprised of the duties which they had respectively to perform. To many the day appeared interminably long, and some passed the tedious hours in real or affected merriment; but others in the performance of a more sacred duty—that of conveying to wives or relatives what might prove the last expressions of an undying regard.

To the third and light divisions, whose turns of duties fell upon the 19th, the assault was confided by Lord Wellington; and they marched from their cantonments to the more immediate vicinity of the trenches. A few minutes after six o'clock, the third moved to the rear of the first parallel, two gun-shots from the main breach, while the Light Division formed behind a convent, three hundred yards in front of the smaller one. Darkness came on,—and with it the order to “Stand to arms.” With calm determination, the soldiers of the third division heard their commanding officer announce the main breach as the object of attack, and every man prepared himself promptly for the desperate struggle. Off went the packs,—the stocks were unbuckled,—the cartouch-box arranged to meet the hand more readily, flints were screwed home,—every one, after his individual fancy, fitting himself for action. The companies were carefully told off—the serjeants called the rolls—and not a man was missing!

Though the interval from the time when the storming parties entered the trenches until they moved forward to the assault was brief, it was a period of most intense anxiety and excitement; and accidental circumstances tended to deepen those impressions, which coming events could not have failed to produce. “The evening was calm and tranquil, and the moon, in her first quarter, shed over the scene a feeble light, which, without disclosing the shape or form of particular objects, rendered their

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rude outline distinctly visible. There stood the fortress, a confused mass of masonry, with its breaches like shadows cast upon the wall; whilst not a gun was fired from it, and all within was as still and motionless as if it were already a ruin, or its inhabitants were buried in sleep. On our side, again, the trenches crowded with armed men, among whom not so much as a whisper might be heard, presented no unapt resemblance to a dark thunder-cloud, or to a volcano in that state of tremendous quiet which usually precedes its most violent eruptions."

The bell from the tower of the cathedral tolled seven; and, in obedience to previous orders, the troops marched rapidly, but silently, to the assault. The third division, preceded by its storming party under Major Manners, a forlorn hope under Lieutenant Mackie, and accompanied by a body of sappers with hay-bags and ladders, made directly for the greater breach; while the Light Division, led by Major George Napier, with 300 volunteers, and a forlorn hope under Lieutenant Gurwood, were directed against the lesser one. A Portuguese brigade, commanded by General Pack, were to alarm the fortress on the opposite side, and threaten to escalate at the gate of St. Jago; and, should circumstances warrant the attempt, convert a false attack into a real one.

No piece of clock-work, however nicely arranged, could obey the will of its maker more accurately than the different columns obeyed that night the wishes of their chief; and his orders were, in consequence, executed at every point with the same precision and regularity as if he had been manœuvring so many battalions upon parade. For a few moments the heavy tramp of many men put simultaneously into motion alone broke upon the solemn stillness of the evening. But, suddenly, a shout upon the right of the line nearest the bridge was heard; it was taken up along the whole line of attack,—a spattering of musketry succeeded—the storming parties rushed forward to the breaches,—and every gun upon the ramparts that would bear opened with one tremendous crash, and told that the garrison were prepared for the assault and ready to repel it.

At the first alarm, the storming party of the third

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division advanced, and descended the ditch. At the bottom, a range of heavy shells had been placed with continued fuses; but, hurried by the suddenness of the attack, the French prematurely fired them, and their fury had fortunately expended itself before the assailants were close enough to suffer from a murderous explosion.

“General M’Kinnon’s brigade instantly pushed up the breach, in conjunction with the 5th and 94th regiments, which arrived at the same moment along the ditch from their right. The men mounted in a most gallant manner against an equally gallant resistance; and it was not till after a sharp struggle of some minutes that the bayonets of the assailants prevailed, and gained them a footing on the summit of the rampart. The defenders then concentrated behind the retrenchment, which they obstinately maintained, and a second severe struggle commenced.” The lesser breach was, at the same time, assaulted with equal intrepidity, but more decided success. The darkness of the ditch occasioned a momentary confusion, which the fall of the leading officers increased; while the ardour of the light troops brought so many to the breach, that they choked its narrow aperture with their numbers. For a moment the assailants recoiled, but it was only to return more resolutely to the onset. A cheer was heard above the thunder of artillery,—up rushed the stormers,—the breach was gained,—the supporting regiments mounted in sections, formed on the rampart, the 52nd wheeling to the left, the 43rd to the right,—and that success alone would have decided the fate of Rodrigo.

Although the greater breach had been carried by the first rush, isolated by a rampart 12 feet deep in front, retrenched on either flank, and swept by the fire of a field-piece and musketry from the houses which overlooked and enfiladed it, the progress of the storming party was arrested and men and officers fell fast. At this trying moment, the gallantry of an adventurous individual opened the gates of success. Mackie, who led the forlorn hope, dropping from the rampart into the town, discovered that the trench upon the right of the breach was cut quite across, and consequently, that an opening was left by which the assailants might get in. Reascending the top

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of the breach, he led the men through the trench into the street; and the enemy, on their appearance, abandoned any further effort at defence, and fled towards the citadel. The false attack by the Portuguese, under General Pack, had been equally effective. They carried by escalade a small redan in front of the St. Jago gate, and of course materially assisted in distracting the attention of the garrison by the alarm their movement had caused.

Thus terminated the ever-memorable siege of Ciudad Rodrigo.

The rapid reduction of Ciudad Rodrigo was unparalleled in modern war, and its fall was so unexpected that Marmont's efforts to relieve it were scarcely conceived and commenced before the tidings reached it that the fortress he prized so highly was lost. By the lowest estimate of time it was calculated that four-and-twenty days would be required to bring the siege to a successful issue. On the 8th, ground was broken; and on the 19th, the British colours were flying from the flag-staff of the citadel. Massena, after a tedious bombardment, took a full month to reduce it; Wellington carried it by assault in eleven days. No wonder, therefore, that Marmont, in his despatch to Berthier, was puzzled to account for the rapid reduction of a place, respecting whose present safety and ultimate relief he had previously forwarded the most encouraging assurances.

The splendid achievement of the conqueror of Rodrigo obtained an honourable requital. He was advanced, in Spain, to the rank of a grandee of the first order, with the title of Duque de Ciudad Rodrigo; by the Portuguese he was made Marquis of Torres Vedras; and at home, raised to the earldom of Wellington, with an increased annuity of 2000*l.* a year.

Active but secret preparations had been going on for some weeks for the investment of Badajoz. As early as December, a secret order had been transmitted to Lisbon for the construction of twenty-four pontoons to form a bridge at Abrantes; and on the 26th of January the preliminaries for besieging Badajoz were definitely arranged with the commanding engineer by Lord Wellington. The battering-train, which was embarked in large vessels as

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for some distant service, was transhipped on gaining the open sea, and conveyed in small craft up the river Caldao, and landed at Alcacer de Sol, whence the guns were transported by land to the Guadiana. On their arrival at Lord Wellington's head-quarters at Elvas, the preparations for the siege were found to be in a very forward state; all the tools and stores had arrived: the pontoon-bridge apparatus had been landed in good order, from 3000 to 4000 gabions completed, and the whole of the ordnance had been parked upon the glacis of Elvas. The train consisted of sixteen 24-pounders, twenty 18-pounders, and sixteen iron 24-pound howitzers. On the 15th of March the pontoon-bridge was laid across the Guadiana, as well as a flying bridge formed by two large Spanish boats. The same evening General le Marchant passed the bridge with 12,000 men, and invested Badajoz on the south side without any opposition. The covering force, under Generals Graham and Hill, occupied Merida, Llerina, and Almandralejos; watching the country to the south where Soult had an army of 35,000 men, which it was expected would unite with Marmont, in order to advance to the relief of Badajoz. The garrison was commanded by General Philipon, an officer of undoubted courage, who had applied himself vigorously to the task of strengthening its defences; and animated by the recollection of its successful resistance on former occasions, seemed to promise an unusually stout resistance.

The operations of the British commander were conducted under great disadvantages. A movement into Spain, such as was now contemplated against Andalusia, could not be effected without magazines when there was no harvest on the ground, excepting by ready money, and at this juncture his military chest was all but exhausted. To such an extent, indeed, was he straightened for means, that the war was more than once on the point of being totally arrested for want of money.

When Lord Wellington and his chief engineer officer had made a close reconnaissance of Badajoz, they discovered that its defences had been greatly improved and strengthened since the former siege. The scarps were many of them heightened, the outworks strongly

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finished, and a portion of the enceinte was covered by an impassable inundation. Philipon had also put the castle in so complete a state of defence, that a regular attack upon it was out of the question, the British army having no miners; sappers without experience; no mortars; and a very inadequate proportion of guns for the siege of so well-armed and well-provided a fortress. Had the means been at hand, there was not time for the patient process of a regular siege; and as its walls could not, like those of Ciudad Rodrigo, be breached from a distance, Lord Wellington determined by a bold effort to make himself master of a detached fort called the Picurina, from whose site the escarp of one front could be seen low enough to be breached with effect.

CHAPTER XIV

DURING the night of the 17th, which was wet and stormy, Lord Wellington broke ground in front of the Picurina within 160 yards of the fort. The tempestuous state of the weather favoured the operation so far as to enable the workmen to proceed, undiscovered by the enemy, until daybreak, by which time the approaches were three feet deep. During the 18th the work continued; the relief improving the parallel; and the garrison, which had been strongly reinforced, keeping up an incessant fire of musketry on the labourers, assisted by occasional discharges from field-pieces and howitzers. The fire, however, did not prove very effective; and during the night the parallels were prolonged, and two batteries traced out. On the 19th, 1500 of the garrison, under General Vielland, made a spirited sortie from the town by the Talavera gate, and with 100 from the Picurina, fell suddenly, taking them by surprise, on the working party in the parallel. Mostly unarmed, and wholly unprepared, the men were driven from the trench in the first instance in great confusion; but being almost immediately rallied by their officers, they in turn charged the French, and vigorously repulsed them. In this affair 150 of the

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besiegers were killed or wounded (among the latter Colonel Fletcher, the commanding engineer); but no material check was given to the operations of the siege. The French are said to have lost 300 officers and men; the state of the weather, however, was such, on the 22nd, as to threaten a total stop to the operations. An unusual rise of the Guadiana had swept away the pontoon bridge; the flying bridge could not be worked, and the passage of all supplies was completely suspended. In addition to these casualties, the trenches were always full of water: and the earth thrown up, retaining no shape, was speedily washed down again. Half the day was consumed in emptying the trenches of rain-water; and the bottom became so muddy, that it was found necessary to have it artificially renewed by a layer of sand-bags and fascines.

These obstacles, however, served but to stimulate Lord Wellington to even severer exertions. By immense labour, the bridge over the Guadiana was restored, and the breaching batteries fully armed by the 24th; and at eleven o'clock on the morning of the 25th the roar of artillery announced that the British guns had opened their fire, the chief object being to break down the palisades in the covered-way, and otherwise damage the defences of the Picurina. But little mischief was however effected, and time growing precious, Lord Wellington ordered the fort to be stormed the same night. In the interim the enemy had deepened the ditch of the Picurina, and strengthened the gorge with a second row of palisades. They had also formed galleries communicating with each other, and brought a reverse fire to flank the ditches. Under the three angles they placed fougasses, and arrayed upon the parapets loaded shells and barrels of combustibles, which were to be rolled down among the assailants at the moment of assault; and that each man might have several pieces to discharge, 200 loaded muskets were ranged along the interior of the banquettes. The direction of the assault on the Picurina was given to Major-General Kempt, who commanded in the trenches. The assaulting party, 500 in number, from the 3rd division, attacked the fort, and after a gallant defence, succeeded in their object, although at a heavy cost of life. The loss on the part of

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the besiegers was four officers and fifty men killed, and 250 men wounded. The garrison of the Picurina consisted of 250 men, of whom all but eighty-six were either destroyed during the assault, or drowned in attempting to escape across the inundation. The second parallel was now formed in advance of the fort; breaching batteries were erected within it; and after five days' firing, two breaches were formed, one in the face of the Trinidad bastion; the other on the flank which defended the bastion of Sta. Maria, and the assault was ordered in the evening of the 5th of April, both breaches having been reported practicable.

The rapid approach of Marshal Soult, whose advanced guard had already arrived at Llerena, had induced the allied general to decide on commencing the assault that evening. With this view he made a reconnaissance of the breaches; but the commanding engineer having reported that the enemy had retrenched the greater breach, and had adopted the most effectual means of offering an obstinate resistance, Lord Wellington decided on deferring the attack until the ensuing day, ordering all the batteries to converge their fire upon the old wall of the curtain between the two bastions breached, so as in one day to form a third opening into the place, which the besieged would not have time to retrench. Preparations were accordingly made for storming the fortress on the night of the 6th. Lord Wellington's plan of attack was originally confined to the storming of the bastions, and the carrying of the castle by escalade. The breach of La Trinidad was to be assaulted by the 4th division, under Major-General Colville, and that of Santa Maria, by the light, under Lieut.-Colonel Barnard; while the 3rd division were ordered to assail the castle. The ravelin of San Roque was also to be attempted by detachments of covering parties from the trenches; and to distract the attention of the garrison, a false alarm was to be made against the Pardaleras. The breach in the curtain induced Lord Wellington to enlarge his plan of attack; and, on the 6th, a memorandum was addressed to Major-General Colville, to allot a portion of the advance of the 4th division to storm the breach in the curtain between the bastions Santa

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Maria and La Trinidad. Further, as the garrison were hourly improving their defensive expedients, Lieut.-General Leith was directed to employ a brigade of the 5th division to escalate the bastion of St. Vincente, or the curtain and flank between it and the bridge over the Guadiana, and to be prepared to support this brigade with the remainder of his division.

Phillipon had made every preparation to receive the assault, which his own observations led him to expect upon the night it was given, and which belief the intelligence of deserters had confirmed. The French governor "availed himself of the inability of the besiegers to destroy the counterscarps,—an operation they had neither time nor means of accomplishing,—and formed behind the breaches the most formidable obstructions which destructive ingenuity could devise. Night and day they were employed in clearing away the rubbish, destroying the ramps of the covered way, and making retrenchments behind the trenches. The fallen parapets were replaced with fascines, sand-bags, and wool-packs; casks filled with tarred straw, powder, and loaded grenades, were arranged along the trenches, and large shells with them. Immediately in front of the breaches, at the foot of the counterscarp, sixty 14-inch shells were placed in a circular form, about four yards apart, and covered with some four inches of earth, and a communication formed to them with powder-hoses placed between tiles in the manner of mine-tubes. *Chevaux de frise* were formed of sabre-blades; all the artillery stores were turned to account; and even a large boat was lowered into the ditch and filled with soldiers, to flank one of the breaches."

The day passed, and every preparation for the assault was completed. The evening was dark and threatening,—twilight came,—the batteries ceased firing,—darkness fell,—and the trenches, though crowded with armed men, remained unusually quiet. Lights were seen occasionally flitting backward and forward through the fortress, and the "All's well" of the French sentinels was distinctly heard. While waiting in readiness for the assault, the deep gloom which hitherto had shrouded the beleaguered city, was suddenly dissipated by a flight of fireworks,

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which rose over the town, and displayed **every** object around it.

The word was given to advance, and the 4th and light divisions issued from the trenches. "At that moment the deep bell of the cathedral of St. John struck ten; an unusual silence reigned around, and except the softened footsteps of the storming parties, as they fell upon the turf with military precision, not a movement was audible. A terrible suspense—a horrible stillness,—darkness,—a compression of the breathing,—the dull and ill-defined outline of the town,—the knowledge that similar and simultaneous movements were making on other points,—the certainty that two or three minutes would probably involve the forlorn-hope in ruin, or make it a beacon-light to conquest,—all these made the heart throb quicker, and long for the bursting of the storm, when victory should crown daring with success, or hope and life should end together.

"On went the storming parties; and one solitary musket was discharged beside the breach, but none answered it. The ditch was gained,—the ladders were lowered,—on rushed the forlorn-hope, with the storming-party close behind them. The divisions were now on the brink of the sheer descent, when a gun boomed from the parapet. The earth trembled,—a mine was fired,—an explosion,—and an infernal hissing from lighted fuses succeeded,—and, like the rising of a curtain on the stage, in the hellish glare that suddenly burst out around the breaches, the French, lining the ramparts in crowds, and the British descending the ditch, were placed as distinctly visible to each other as if the hour were noontide!"

The explosion nearly annihilated the forlorn-hope, and the heads of the storming party. For a moment, astounded by the deafening noise, the supporting troops held back; but as if by a general impulse, some rushed down the ladders which had been lowered to the bottom of the ditch,—others leaped boldly in, reckless of the depth of the descent,—and while some mistook the face of an unfinished ravelin for the breach, which on gaining was found to be entirely separated from the ramparts, the rest struggled desperately up the breach, only to encounter

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at the summit a range of sword-blades, framed in beams too massive to be cut through, and secured by iron chains beyond the power of removal.

In this fearful situation, the courage of the assailants assumed a desperation that appears almost incredible : officers and men in fast succession gained the summit, only to be shot down ; and many perished in vain attempts to force an impassable barrier of bristling sword-blades. "The garrison never appeared intimidated, or to lose their decision and coolness for a moment on any point ; for whilst some were repelling the assailants with their bayonets from the summits of the breaches, others continued to roll down, with the greatest precision and effect, shells and fire-barrels on the men in the ditch below, and their tirailleurs unceasingly fired with accuracy and steadiness from cuts in the parapets between the points of contention.

"Similar gallant efforts to those above described were frequently repeated to carry the breaches, but the combustibles prepared by the garrison seemed inexhaustible. Each time the assailants were opposed by appalling and destructive explosions, and each time were driven down with a great loss of officers and of the bravest soldiers. After several efforts, the remaining men, discouraged by such constant repulses, could not be prevailed upon to make a further effort. Their situation in the ditch of a front, with an incessant fire upon them from the parapets, was most trying ; still not an individual attempted to withdraw—they remained patiently to be slaughtered, though far too discouraged to make a fresh attempt to extricate themselves by forcing the breaches."

But at other points bravery obtained success, and Badajoz was already carried. The 3rd division crossed the Rivillas, surmounted the castle-hill, and under a tremendous fire, planted their ladders. The boldest led the way,—and unappalled by a shower of shells and missiles, they gained the parapet. But there the French received them with the bayonet : while utterly incapable of resistance, they were hurled from the top, and crushed by huge stones and beams which, showered from the walls, destroyed any who survived the fall. Receding a few

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paces, the assailants formed again—two officers caught up the ladders, and the boldest men sprang after. Both reached the parapet unharmed,—the assailants swarmed up,—a firm footing was gained,—and the bayonet did the rest. Too late, a reinforcement detached by Phillipon reached the gate, and a sharp fusillade ensued, in which Colonel Ridge was most unfortunately slain. But the French retired in despair, and the castle remained in the possession of the “fighting third.”

Badajoz, on that fearful night, was encircled by men, desperately resolute to force their way through the iron defences that opposed them. A heavy fire had been opened on the Pardaleras,—the bridge was assailed by the Portuguese,—and the more distant bastion of San Vincente was at the same time escaladed by Walker's brigade. After a desperate resistance, the French were driven along the ramparts, each bastion resolutely defended and each as bravely stormed.

In carrying the last, General Walker was severely wounded. A lighted port-fire having alarmed a soldier, he called out loudly that a mine was sprung, and a singular panic arose among troops, who but a few minutes before had braved death so recklessly. The whole gave ground, while General Vieland, coming up with a French reinforcement, drove the affrighted soldiers along the rampart, and recovered possession of the works to the very bastion of San Vincente. But there, a weak battalion of the 38th had been held in reserve. Retaining their fire until the enemy closed, a shattering volley was delivered, and the regiment cheered and charged. Instantly the routed soldiers rallied—all advanced with renewed confidence—and the French, abandoning the defences, fled into the town, followed by a part of the assailants.

Resistance had ceased on the part of the garrison. Some irregular fighting occurred in the streets, but the intelligence of the capture of the castle at once occasioned an abandonment of the breaches—and Phillipon and Vieland, with part of the garrison, retired to San Christoval, where they surrendered on the first summons in the morning. At daybreak the remnant of the 4th and light divisions entered the breaches unopposed; and

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Badajoz, after a well-conducted defence, and a last and desperate effort to repulse an assault, fell to no ordinary conqueror.

In reviewing this celebrated siege and assault, one feels at a loss whether to admire more that lofty flight of genius, which, by great daring, and setting at nought all military maxims, effected what ordinary men would not have attempted; or the matchless valour of British soldiers, which death, presented in every horrible variety, never could extinguish. That the attempt upon the breaches should not succeed, one fact will easily explain.—When the columns arrived before them in the morning, no enemy to oppose, and with daylight to direct their entrance, time was required to remove the numerous obstacles which presented themselves, before a descent into the town was possible. Veiled in impenetrable darkness, and desperately defended, who could surmount those formidable barriers and live? And the wonder is, not that the troops should fail in forcing a passage, but that, when hope was over, they should firmly remain to be slaughtered by an enemy on whom they could not retaliate, and persevere to the last, until a formal order was delivered to recall them from that fatal breach. To account for the capture of the castle and San Vincente is difficult indeed. In ordinary military reasoning such places would be considered safe from assault; but the efforts of the British troops occasionally set all calculation at defiance; and when a few years shall have swept away eye-witnesses of their achievements on this night, they will not be credited.

CHAPTER XV

THE satisfaction which the brilliant successes of this last campaign had afforded Lord Wellington was now alloyed by news from home, that the Marquess of Wellesley had resigned the direction of foreign affairs, partly from his unwillingness to hold a subordinate post under Mr. Perceval, but chiefly in consequence of his inability to

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obtain such support for his gallant brother as he conceived to be necessary to enable him to insure a successful termination to the war. This discouraging intelligence did not, however, stay the British general in his career of conquest ; and being now at the head of the finest army he had ever commanded, he decided on assuming the offensive, and marching against Marmont. As a preliminary measure, however, it became important to secure his right flank from molestation during a forward operation, and as the boat bridge at Almaraz afforded a safe and easy communication between Marmont and Soult, and was, moreover, the only passage suited to the movements of an army below Toledo, it became of importance to destroy it before attempting an operation on Leon. A plan for this achievement had been for some time under the consideration of Lord Wellington ; and having been communicated to Lord Hill, who remained southward of the Guadiana, he quitted Almandralejos on the 12th of May, with 6000 men, and, crossing that river at Merida, moved on Truxillo with the view of undertaking the operation.

To cover these important communications by Almaraz, the French, besides two *têtes-de-pont*, had erected formidable forts on each side of the Tagus, which were strongly garrisoned. Marching rapidly by Jairaicejo, Sir Rowland Hill reached the range of mountains on which stands the castle of Mirabete (about five miles from Almaraz) on the 18th of May ; when, finding the passage for his artillery effectually barred by entrenchments, he boldly resolved on attempting the enterprise with infantry alone. Leaving, therefore, his guns behind him, he moved by a mountain-track leading towards the village of Romangorda, and after dark descended towards the river with 2000 men under General Howard. The attempt was daring and hazardous in the extreme. The march of the English general through Truxillo had been communicated to the French commanders ; and, at a distance of four marches from Merida, Hill had good reason to apprehend that Drouet, with overwhelming numbers, would move rapidly to Medillin, and endeavour to intercept his retreat. The danger was great, but it did not deter him ; and, on the evening of the 18th, he marched on his daring enterprise.

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The right column had consisted of the 50th, 71st, and 92nd regiments; but it was reinforced from that of the centre with the 6th Portuguese, a company of riflemen, and a detachment of gunners. At dusk, the division descended from the sierra; but though the distance was not above two leagues, the whole night was consumed in traversing the valley; and when the head of the column halted under cover of some hillocks, which hid it from the enemy, the rear was still winding slowly through a path which no foot save that of the shepherd had ever trod before. While waiting for the straggling sections to come up, the opening roar of cannon announced that Chavne's false attack on Mirabete had commenced. " Pillars of white smoke rose on the lofty brow of the sierra, the heavy sound of artillery came rolling over the valley; and the garrison of Fort Napoleon, crowding on the ramparts, were anxiously gazing at these portentous signs of war, when, quick and loud, a British shout broke on their ears, and the gallant 50th regiment, aided by a wing of the 71st, came bounding over the nearest hills."

Although astonished at the suddenness of the assault, the French were ready to repel it. A villager had already brought them intelligence of Hill's approach, and a cavalry picket, in British uniform, had been discovered on the mountain. In consequence, the garrison of Fort Napoleon had been reinforced; and they instantly opened a heavy discharge from small arms and artillery, which the guns on Fort Ragusa supported by a flanking fire, until the ground immediately in front of the rampart sheltered the assailants from its effects. The assault was splendidly successful, for nothing could check the ardour with which it was given. In a few minutes the parapet was escalated; and the inner defences, after a brief resistance, were abandoned, the garrison flying for shelter to the *tête-de-pont*. But, with dashing gallantry, the leading files of the assailants bore rapidly onwards, and entered the work intermingled with the fugitives from the fort; and in a rush across the bridge, which had been previously injured by the sinking of several of its pontoons, many of the French perished in the river. The panic of the garrison of Fort Ragusa was increased by the fire of Fort Napoleon;

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and although the redoubt was secure, the commandant abandoned it most disgracefully, and added its defenders to the fugitive troops who were hurrying towards Naval Moral. The river was soon passed; the towers and magazines in the forts, and in the *tête-de-pont*, were blown up; the guns thrown into the Tagus; the palisades, barriers, stores of timber and of tools, the pontoons and their carriages, were consumed by fire, and the works utterly effaced and destroyed.

In addition to the destruction of the brigade and works, attended with a severe loss in killed and drowned, 260 prisoners were taken, including the governor and sixteen officers. A colour belonging to the 4th battalion of the *Corps Étranger* was captured by the 71st; and the whole was achieved with a loss comparatively trifling, namely, 33 men killed, and 147 wounded.

Separated from the right bank of the Tagus, the castle and works at Mirabete must have fallen had Hill ventured to attack them; but within the reach of several French corps, and alarmed by a groundless report from Sir William Erskine, that Soult with his united divisions was actually in Estremadura, the English General very prudently retreated on the 21st, and reached Merida safely on the 26th. Having effected the object of his expedition, there was nothing to be gained equivalent to the risk it must involve; and the possession of the mountain forts would not have made amends for the valuable blood which must have been shed in taking them.

Of Lord Wellington's lieutenants none was more popular than Sir Rowland Hill; and the issue of his enterprise gave unfeigned satisfaction to the army, whilst it astounded both Soult and Marmont to find piles of ruin where they had left well-constructed forts, and an impassable river between their forces and the garrison of the castle of Mirabete. Whilst depriving the French of their communication across the Tagus, Lord Wellington was fully alive to the importance of establishing a permanent communication for his own army across that river, and fixed upon Alcantara as the most eligible point for that purpose, as the approach to it from the south was covered by Badajoz. The remains of a Roman bridge leaving a chasm of 100 feet wide, which

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could hardly be repaired, and the impetuous character of the river in that neighbourhood, rendered a bridge of boats unsuited to the object. The engineers of the royal staff corps having been sent to examine the ruin, suggested a sort of chain of cord, which was found to answer the purpose, across which a small battering-train was conveyed without difficulty. The allied army remained perfectly quiet whilst these preliminary operations were in progress; and a month's provision for the whole of the troops having been collected and stored at Ciudad Rodrigo, they suddenly broke up from its cantonments, passed the Agueda on the 13th of June, and on the 17th appeared before Salamanca; and as the Allies advanced, Marmont retired.

On the morning of the 17th the Allies crossed the Tormes by the fords of Santa Martha and Los Cantos; and Lord Wellington entered Salamanca at the head of his victorious troops. "Nothing could be more animating than the scene. The day was brilliant, presenting all the glowing luxuriance of a southern climate. Upwards of fifty staff officers accompanied the British general; they were immediately followed by the 14th Dragoons and a brigade of artillery; the streets were crowded to excess; signals of enthusiasm and friendship waved from the balconies; the entrance to the Plaza was similar to a triumph; every window and balcony was filled with persons welcoming the distinguished officer to whom they looked up for liberation and permanent relief. Lord Wellington dismounted, and was immediately surrounded by the municipality, and the higher orders of the inhabitants, all eager to pay him respect and homage. At the same moment, the 6th division of British infantry entered the south-west angle of the square. It is impossible to describe the electric effect produced under these circumstances by the music; as the bands of the regiments burst in full tones on the ear of the people, a shout of enthusiastic feeling escaped from the crowd, all ranks seeming perfectly inebriated with exultation.

The besiegers broke ground before the convent of St. Vicente on the 17th, and on the 19th their artillery battered in a breach, but their ammunition was exhausted before a

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way into the fort had been opened. Encouraged by the damage which the defences had already sustained, an attempt was made on the 23rd to carry one of the smaller forts, the Gayetanos, by escalade. In this attempt, which was unsuccessful, Major-General Bowes was killed, whilst gallantly cheering on his men to the attack.

A suspension of the siege for want of ammunition now took place until the 26th, when hot shot having been directed into the roof of the convent of San Vicente, it was speedily set on fire. On this occasion the garrison succeeded in extinguishing the flames; but the use of hot shot having been resumed on the following day, the whole building was set on fire, and a practicable breach having been effected in the gorge of the Gayentanos, the troops were about to commence an assault, when a white flag was displayed. A brief parley ensued, which proving unsatisfactory to Lord Wellington, he gave the word to storm; and the two small forts were immediately carried. The Commandant of San Vicente asked for terms, and surrendered. The loss of the British troops since the passage of the Tormes had not exceeded 86 officers and 450 rank and file in killed and wounded. Few of the enemy were slain, but 700 were taken prisoners. The works were destroyed, and the guns and stores handed over to the Spaniards; among the latter was a large quantity of clothing, Salamanca having been the grand depot of the army of Portugal.

No sooner did Marmont ascertain the fall of the works than he withdrew the garrison from Alba de Tormes, and retired upon the Douro. On the 2nd of July the cavalry of the Allies overtook his rear-guard near Tordesillas. The British line stretched from La Seca on the right to Pollos on its left. Head-quarters had been established at Rueda, and the Douro flowed between the hostile armies. The position of the French was the stronger of the two. Marmont's left rested on the Pisuerga, which is unfordable at Simancas; his centre being at Tordesillas, and his right on the heights opposite Pollos. One hundred pieces of cannon protected the bridge of Tordesillas, and the forts of the Douro, between Toro and Pisuerga. Lord Wellington made several unsuccessful attempts to bring Marmont

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to action; but although he had received reinforcements which had increased his army to 40,000 men, he seemed to be in no haste to commence the struggle.

The reduction of the convent's forts, however, was but the preliminary of a much more brilliant triumph. From the 3rd to the 15th of July, the two armies lay opposite to each other, watchful and inactive, with the exception of some slight alteration in their respective positions. On the 16th, two divisions of the French crossed at Toro; but this movement was merely intended as a demonstration. They crossed it in the night, and destroyed the bridge again, effecting their junction with Marmont at Torde-sillas. Here the whole force being concentrated, passed the river, and by a forced march was, early on the 18th, in the presence of the two British divisions on the Trancos. By this movement the communication of Marmont with Madrid, whence he expected to be joined by the army of the centre, was opened, and the two hostile divisions before him were placed in some danger. The situation of the light and 4th divisions more especially was very critical. Already was the enemy menacing their line of retreat, and pressing upon both flanks, when Wellington, seeing their danger, quickly advanced a force of cavalry and horse-artillery to check the progress of the French; and thus obviated the difficulty; directing the retreat of the endangered troops on the heights of Canizal, in their rear. This operation was executed with perfect order and very little loss, although the retiring force was pursued so closely that the enemy were enabled to open upon them from forty pieces of artillery.

What could be more beautiful than the military spectacle which the movement of 90,000 men, in parallel lines, presented? The line of march was seldom without the range of cannon, and often within that of musketry. When the ground allowed it, the guns on each side occasionally opened. But the cannonade was but partially maintained. To reach a point was Marmont's object—to intercept him was that of Wellington. "The French general moving his army as one man along the crest of the heights, preserved the lead he had taken, and made no mistake;" and the extraordinary rapidity of his marching

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bore evidence to the truth of Napoleon's observation, that "for his greatest successes he was as much indebted to the legs as he was to the arms of his soldiers."

The morning of the 21st found the Allied army on its old position of San Christoval. At noon, from the rear of the Arapiles, Marmont made a demonstration, as if his design was to attack the Allied left. The movement brought Lord Wellington to the ground; but readily perceiving that it was but a feint of the French marshal, he returned to his former position on the right. At two o'clock, finding his abler antagonist was not to be deceived, Marmont determined to outflank the right of the Allies, and interpose between them and the Rodrigo road; and in consequence, commenced marching his columns by their left. This was a fatal movement—and as the French infantry extended, a staff officer announced it to Lord Wellington. One eagle glance satisfied him that the movement for attack was come—a few brief orders passed his lips—and the doom of his rival's army was pronounced.

Marmont was already at the head of 47,000 good troops, outnumbering the Allies by at least 5000 men, and but for this fatal error, possessed a great advantage over his opponents. The British general, concluding from this movement of Marmont that he sought to strike a blow on the left of the Tormes, forthwith ordered the 3rd division and D'Urban's cavalry, posted at Cabreirizos, to cross the river and place themselves behind the village of Aldea Tejada, in readiness to cover the Ciudad Rodrigo road. He also moved up Carlos de Espana's infantry, and Brigadier-General Bradford's Portuguese brigade, to the neighbourhood of Las Torres, to serve as a connecting link between those troops and the 4th division, which was now posted in rear of the Arapiles hamlet. By these arrangements the Allies' line was placed nearly perpendicular to its original position, its left occupying the nearer peak of the Arapiles, and its right extending to Aldea Tejada; but an interval of nearly two miles occurred between the actual and apparent right, for the third division was partially concealed by the nature of the ground. Misled by this circumstance, the French Marshal supposed the right of

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the Allied Army to be "in the air," and planned his manœuvres accordingly. The British remained tranquil, whilst ostentatious but idle manœuvres were going on, until about two o'clock, when a cloud of skirmishers issued from the French left wing, and at the same moment a heavy cannonade was opened on the Allied troops.

Shortly afterwards, the enemy was seen moving to the left, with the evident intention of interposing a force between the Allied army and Ciudad Rodrigo. Watching them from the Arapiles, Wellington saw them incautiously extending their line, and dangerously exposing their left wing, and, after an exulting exclamation of "At last I have them!" hastened to take advantage of the error. He immediately reinforced his right with the 5th division (General Leith), which took post on the right of the 4th, under General Cole; having the 6th and 7th divisions, commanded by Generals H. Clinton and Hope, in second line. The 1st and light divisions, under Generals Campbell and Alten, with Pack's Portuguese brigade, were placed as a reserve behind the Arapiles. The British cavalry, under Sir Stapleton Cotton, was posted principally on the right, the rest being dispersed with the infantry in second line. These arrangements having been completed, the 3rd division, with D'Urban's cavalry and two squadrons of the 14th Light Dragoons, under Lieutenant-Colonel Hervey, were ordered to advance from Aldea Tejada, and fall on the enemy's left flank, whilst the 4th and 5th divisions, Bradford's Portuguese brigade, and the heavy cavalry, should attack them in front. Accordingly, General Pakenham, who during Picton's absence on account of illness commanded the 3rd division, moved forward with the greatest celerity, supported by D'Urban and Hervey, and was close upon the enemy's flank before they became aware of this object. To effect a change was impracticable, and in a few minutes their extreme left was overthrown. Pressing onwards, the assailants drove all before them, out-flanking the French at every point where they attempted to make a stand, and capturing 3000 prisoners. Almost simultaneously, Pack's brigade advanced against the post on the Arapiles hill, whilst Cole and Leith attacked the front of their position, which was

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immediately forced; and Cotton's heavy cavalry making an opportune and irresistible charge upon a body of their disordered infantry, routed it and cut it to pieces; but the brave General Le Marchant fell at the head of his brigade in this enterprise.

Meanwhile, the Allied infantry kept pressing forward its right, so as continually to acquire strength upon the enemy's flank; but the gallant effort of Pack on the Arapiles having failed, they were enabled to throw some troops on the flank of the 4th division, whilst that body, which had already carried the crests of the heights in front, was stoutly met by a reserve division under General Bennet. General Cole himself was wounded, and thus closely pressed, was compelled to give way, but Marshal Beresford, who happened to be on the spot, immediately brought up a brigade of the 5th division, which, by a change of front, took the enemy in flank with a heavy fire, and drove them again backwards. The left and centre of the enemy were now beaten, and a brigade from the division of General Clinton carried the Arapiles. The French right was, however, as yet unbroken, whilst it was strengthened every moment by the troops defeated on the left; so that it presented a new and stubborn front on a well-chosen position. Marmont had been wounded, but General Clausel, who had succeeded him in the command, rallied the disheartened army in a manner which excited the admiration of his enemies. Supported by a reserve, with the cavalry on their flanks, and their artillery posted on advanced knolls, the face of the heights was a clear glacis swept by their guns.

Day was fast closing, but Lord Wellington was not the man to rest satisfied with an imperfect victory. The 6th division, supported by other troops, therefore, was ordered to attack the enemy's position in front, whilst the 1st and Light Dragoons, with a British brigade and a Portuguese one from the 4th, were directed to turn their right. The French stood their ground manfully, and the 6th division suffered severe loss. It nevertheless mounted the hill, and in the face of a tremendous fire charged them with the bayonet, and, supported by the movement of the 4th division on the flank, they drove them back in great

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disorder. The Allies pursued them in the direction of Huerta and the fords of the Tormes; but under cover of the woods and the darkness a great number of the fugitives escaped who must otherwise have been captured. A field covered with slain, two eagles, eleven pieces of artillery, and 7000 prisoners, attested at once the severity of the contest and the splendour of the triumph. Three French generals were killed and four wounded. Among the latter, Marniont lost an arm by the bursting of a shell. The amount of the French loss was never correctly ascertained. The official account gives the total number of killed, wounded and missing of the Allies' troops at 7264, of whom 690 British, 304 Portuguese, and 2 Spanish, were killed, and 4270 British, 1552 Portuguese, and 4 Spanish wounded. Among the wounded were Generals Beresford, Cotton, Cole, Leith, and Alten.

With the dawn of day, the Light Division continued its advance, crossing the Tormes at Huerta, whilst the heavy Germans, under Brock, overtook the French rear-guard in position on the heights of La Terna, protected by some squadrons of hussars. These were dispersed by a charge of the 11th and 16th, whilst the heavy brigade rode directly at the squares, and, by a furious onset, broke and scattered them in all directions. Numbers were cut to pieces; others saved themselves by throwing away their arms, hiding in the woods, and afterwards joining the retreating columns. In this dashing affair nearly a thousand prisoners fell into the hands of the victors. As a cavalry exploit, it has been highly commended. Brock did not lose more than 100 men by casualties on this occasion. The view from the summit of the Terna exhibited, we are told, a countless mass of all arms confusedly intermingled. Whilst the range permitted, the horse-artillery continued to send its round shot among them, but they gradually retired out of reach, and a strong corps of cavalry and a brigade of guns having arrived, opportunely enough, from the army of the north, covered the retreat, and preserved the fugitives from further molestation. This great battle lasted from three in the afternoon until ten.

The inhabitants of Salamanca, who had watched the

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progress of the battle from the high grounds about the city, with breathless interest, displayed the most enthusiastic joy at this total discomfiture of their oppressors, and did not limit their gratitude to the victors to mere words. Mules and cars, laden with refreshment, and other necessities, were dispatched to the camp, and hospitals were prepared for the reception of the wounded. High Mass was celebrated in the cathedral, and the streets were filled with rejoicing promenaders of all orders. Lord Wellington was present at the High Mass, and is thus described by Colonel Leith Hay: "I was much struck with the simplicity of Lord Wellington's attire. He wore a light grey pelisse coat, single-breasted, without a sash, with his sword buckled round his waist, underneath the coat, the hilt merely protruding, with a cocked hat under his arm. He wore a white neckerchief."

Several French historians of the late war attempt to gloss over the defeat at Salamanca, and have ascribed it chiefly to the absence of Marmont (who was severely wounded in an early part of the day) from the field. The fact is, however, undoubted, that he had committed so gross a blunder in the disposition of his force, that its discomfiture, if vigorously attacked, appeared to be certain. The action was pithily described at the time by a French officer, as the "beating of forty thousand men in forty minutes."

Content with having disabled Marmont's army from reappearing in the field for some time, Lord Wellington did not attempt to pursue it beyond Valladolid, which he entered on the 30th, General Clausel falling back on Burgos; but, intending to strike a blow against King Joseph and the army of the centre, the Allied general recrossed the Douro on the following day, and established his head-quarters at Cuellar. Having obtained supplies from the rear, Lord Wellington, leaving Clinton's division to observe the line of the Douro, with Anson's cavalry at Villavarrez, resumed his operations on the 6th of August, marching on the capital by the route of Segovia.

Besides the capture of seventeen pieces of cannon, and nearly one thousand sick and wounded men at Valladolid,

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the French had sustained other and severe losses during the recent operations. The guerillas, under Martinez, made 800 prisoners—Tordesillas surrendered to Santo Cildes—while, alarmed by the movements of the Gallician army, which, in obedience to Lord Wellington's directions, had passed the Douro, and reached the Zapardiel, Clausel gave up the line of the former river. Joseph, after dismantling the castle, forcing a contribution, and robbing the churches of their plate, abandoned Segovia, and retired through the passes of the Guadarama—thus separating his own army from that of Portugal, and leaving the approaches to the capital open to the advance of the Allies.

The moral results of the battle of Salamanca were manifold. That field removed for ever the delusory belief of French superiority; and the enemy fatally discovered that they must measure strength with opponents in every point their equals. The confidence of wavering Allies was confirmed; while the evacuation of Madrid, the abandonment of the siege of Cadiz, the deliverance of Andalusia and Castile from military occupation, and the impossibility of reinforcing Napoleon during his northern campaign, by sparing troops from the corps in the Peninsula—all these important consequences arose from Marmont's defeat upon the Tormes.

The Allied army reached San Ildefonso on the 9th of August, and defiling on the two following days by the passes of the Guadarama and Nava Serrada, descended into the plains of New Castile. On the 11th, an affair of cavalry took place at Magalonda between the horse of the army of the centre and a small body of heavy German and Portuguese cavalry. The enemy having approached the post of General D'Urban's brigade of Portuguese cavalry, the general hazarded a charge against the advanced squadrons of the French; but the Portuguese proved themselves wholly unequal to the encounter. They turned and gave way, leaving three guns of the horse-artillery to the enemy, and fell back upon the Germans in confusion, by whom, however, the French were immediately checked, and driven off. In this unlucky affair, the Allies sustained a loss in killed and wounded of 200 men and 120 horses.

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On the 12th of August, King Joseph having abandoned the capital the preceding day, the French garrison, 1800 in number, closed the gates of the Retiro, and at noon the advanced guard of the Allies reached Madrid, amidst the enthusiastic acclamations of the populace.

The position of Lord Wellington might now have been considered as one of pride and promise. A succession of brilliant operations had ended with the possession of Madrid; an event in itself forming a brilliant epoch in Peninsula history. It told that Wellington held a position and possessed a power, that in England many doubted, and more denied; and those whose evil auguries had predicted a retreat upon the shipping, and finally an abandonment of the country, were astounded to find the Allied leader victorious in the centre of Seville, and dating his general orders from the palace of the Spanish kings. The desertion of his capital by the usurper proclaimed the extent of Wellington's success; and proved that his victories were not, as had been falsely asserted at home, "conquests only in name."

And yet never had Lord Wellington's situation been more insecure than at this bright but deceptive era. At the opening of the campaign, the fertility of the country enabled his antagonist to command every necessary for his subsistence; for all that his army required was exacted with unscrupulous severity. The Allied general had no such resources to rely upon. The British government would not, even in an enemy's territories, carry on war upon so inhuman and iniquitous a system; but it exposed its army to privations, and its general to perplexities and difficulties, which might have paralyzed any weaker mind than that of Lord Wellington, by the parsimony with which it apportioned his means. When he advanced from Salamanca there were but 20,000 dollars in the military chest: the harvest was abundant, but how was bread to be obtained without money?—and the same want would be felt in bringing his supplies from Ciudad Rodrigo, and other places in the rear of that fortress; the very difficulty of removing his wounded to the frontier of Portugal being sufficient to deter him from seeking an action on the Douro.

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The staff had not been paid since February, nor the muleteers since June, 1811. "We are," said Lord Wellington, "absolutely bankrupt." Madrid had been so completely destituted by the French, that he found there nothing but misery and want. He continued, however, to be hailed by its inhabitants with the wildest enthusiasm; the blessings of the people accompanied him wheresoever he went; the municipal authorities gave a bull-fight in his honour; and when he appeared in the royal box, the air rang with the acclamations of 12,000 spectators; he could not walk by daylight for the pressure of the multitudes who gathered round him; yet the troops who had helped to produce this excitement, were wanting the commonest necessities of life. It is not surprising, therefore, that Lord Wellington should have learned to despise the hollow and unsubstantial homage that was heaped upon him and his followers. Don Carlos de Espana having been nominated Governor of Madrid, and a new constitution prepared by the Cortes, the people for many days gave themselves up to rejoicing; but beyond noisy ebullitions of gratitude, they did little to prove the sincerity of their estimate of the services which had afforded them so much happiness.

CHAPTER XVI

AWARE that Joseph had effected a junction with Suchet, and that if Soult and Drouet, who were moving in the direction of Valencia, could unite their forces with those of the King, more than 60,000 men could be collected in that quarter and be immediately disposable, Lord Wellington determined to anticipate their operations by attacking Clausel upon the Douro. Leaving the 3rd and light divisions at Madrid, and the 4th at the Escorial, Lord Wellington quitted the capital on the 1st, and joining the troops assembled at Arrevalo, crossed the Douro, and driving Clausel from Valladolid, pursued his march towards Burgos, but refrained from pressing the enemy, being desirous to form a junction with the Gallician army previous to bringing on an engagement. This junction,

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owing to the dilatoriness of the Spanish Commander, was not effected until the 16th at Pampaliego. Strengthened by about 11,000 Spanish troops, Lord Wellington would have given Clausel battle the next morning, but that the French general withdrew, covering Burgos; and leaving a garrison 2500 strong under General Dubreton in that place, quitted it on the 18th, and retired eastward.

The castle of Burgos stands upon an oblong conical rocky hill; and the defences, as improved very materially by the French, consisted of three lines. The outer line was an old escarp wall, of difficult access, running round the lower part of the hill. This wall they had modernized with a shotproof parapet, and had contrived flanks at the salient and re-entering points. The second line was a strong field-retrenchment, armed with cannon. The third resembled the second; and upon the very summit, an ancient keep had been converted into a heavy casemated battery, and crowned these formidable defences. The castle of Burgos was the chief depot of the enemy; its capture, therefore, was of the utmost importance to the Allied troops. On the 19th of September the castle was regularly invested, and the duties of the siege entrusted to the first and sixth divisions, with the brigades of Pack and Bradford. At 300 yards' distance from the upper works of the castle, and upon a level with them, but separated by a deep ravine, is a hill called San Miguel. Here the enemy had a large hornwork. Upon this hill it was resolved to make a lodgment, and hence to batter the lines, and to attempt each by assault successively when the line preceding was safely secured. This plan was in some degree dictated by the very small park of artillery at the disposal of the besiegers, which consisted only of three 18-pounders and five 24-pound iron howitzers. On the evening of the 19th of September, the hornwork was assaulted and carried with a loss of 400 men in killed and wounded to the besiegers; that of the defenders not exceeding 143.

Until the night of the 22nd, the operations of the siege were vigorously continued; the garrison maintaining a heavy fire of shot and shells upon the working-parties. Anxious, therefore, to abridge the attack, Lord Wellington

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decided on carrying the exterior defences of the castle by escalade, and then forming a lodgment on the wall; and that night the assault was given. Major Laurie, of the 79th, with detachments from the different regiments before the place, formed the storming party. The Portuguese, who led the attack, were quickly repulsed; and though the British entered the ditch, they never could mount a ladder. Those who attempted it were bayoneted from above, while shells, combustibles, and cold shot were hurled on the assailants, who, after a most determined effort for a quarter of an hour, were driven from the ditch, leaving their leader, and half the number who composed the storming party, killed and wounded.

After this discouraging failure, an attempt was made to breach the walls; but the more commanding fire of the castle disabled the few guns placed by the engineers in battery; and nothing remained but to resort to the more tedious but certain method by sap and mine.

The former was, however, of necessity abandoned. The sap, when pushed close to the walls, was open to a plunging fire, while shells were rolled down the bank, and heavy discharges of musketry kept up from the parapet. In carrying the approaches down the hill, the workmen were exposed to the whole artillery of the place; and the only wonder was, that men could be induced to labour steadily under this terrible cannonade. "Showers of grape-shot fell without intermission round the spot, causing an incessant whizzing and rattling amongst the stones, and appeared at the moment to be carrying destruction through the ranks; but, except the necessity of instantly carrying off the wounded, on account of their sufferings, it caused little interruption to the workmen. It was remarked here, as it had been on former occasions, that a wound from a grape-shot is less quietly borne than a wound from a round-shot or musketry. The latter is seldom known in the night, except from the falling of the individual; whereas the former, not unfrequently, draws forth loud lamentations." Up to the 26th of September the besiegers had lost, in killed or wounded, 248.

A gallery was now driven to the base of the escarp—the parapet of the communication between the upper and

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lower trenches being completed; and a chamber of five feet charged with 1100 pounds of gunpowder, and the gallery tamped with sand-bags. At midnight, 300 men were paraded in the lower trenches—the hose was fired—the wall came down, and a sergeant and four privates, who formed the forlorn hope, rushed through the smoke, mounted the ruins, and bravely gained the breach. But in the darkness, which was intense, the storming party and their supporting companies missed their way—and the French, recovering from their surprise, rushed to the breach, and drove the few brave men who held it back to the trenches. The attack, consequently, failed; and from a scarcity of shot no fire could be turned on the ruins. Dubreton availed himself of this accidental advantage; and by daylight the breach was rendered impracticable again.

This last failure produced a general despondency among the troops, and more especially among the Portuguese. They had been working for twelve days, exposed to a close and well-directed fire from the artillery of the castle, without a useful shot having been fired from their own batteries in their support. As the spirits of the troops sank, discipline proportionately relaxed; and neither officers nor men performed their duty in the trenches with the zeal and alacrity which they had previously exhibited. In a letter to Marshal Beresford, Lord Wellington remarks: "Something or other has made a terrible alteration in the troops for the worse. They have lately, in several instances, behaved very ill; and whether it be owing to the nature of the service, or their want of pay, I cannot tell; but they are not at all in the style they were. I am rather inclined to attribute their misbehaviour to the misery and consequent indifference of both officers and soldiers, on account of their want of pay."

The fourth assault met the success that it so well deserved. The mine was sprung at five o'clock, and its effect was ruinous; the wall came down in masses—the explosion shattering the masonry for nearly one hundred feet, and blowing up many of the garrison. "The assault was conducted with the greatest regularity and spirit. In an instant the advanced party were on the ruins; and,

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before the dust created by the explosion had subsided, were in contact with the defenders on the summit of the breach. The party to assault the breach were equally regular and equally successful; and, after a struggle of a few minutes, the garrison were driven into their new covered-way, and behind their palisades."

The casualties amounted to 76 killed, and 323 wounded; but the preceding operations had added heavily to the returns. Lodgments were formed in front of the old and new breaches; but the darkness of the night, and the confusion into which the stormers and workmen had been thrown, rendered both imperfect, and consequently insecure. The following evening the French sallied—overturned the gabions, and inflicted a loss of nearly 150 men. This damage was repaired the next night; and, as a supply of ammunition had reached the park, and convoys were on their way from Ciudad Rodrigo and by Corunna, the drooping spirits of the besiegers were revived. Lord Wellington's time and means were far too limited to allow him to calculate, according to rule, with any certainty upon the fall of Burgos; but from other circumstances it was still possible that its reduction might be effected.

A second sally, on the night of the 7th, was even more disastrous to the assailants than the former one. The works were greatly injured, the entrenching tools carried off, and 200 men killed and wounded. The sortie was bravely repelled—but the gallant officer by whom the hornwork of St. Michael had been carried, fell in this unfortunate *mêlée*. The besiegers lost, from the 6th to the 10th of October, 116 killed, and 268 wounded.

The remainder of the siege may be compressed into general occurrences. Lord Wellington, from the enormous expenditure of musket cartridges, which his weakness in artillery had rendered unavoidable, felt it necessary to change his system of attack; and while the White Church was assailed with hot shot, a gallery was commenced against that of San Roman. The former operation failed—the latter, however, was continued with better success. The old breach in the second line was cleared again by the fire from the hornwork. A new one, on the 18th, was declared practicable; and Lord Wellington

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determined to storm them both, while a strong detachment was to escalate the front of the works and thus correct the attacks upon the breaches. At half-past four in the evening a flag was displayed on a hill west of the castle, as a signal that the mine was sprung. The troops instantly rushed to the breaches—and both were carried most gallantly. The Guards escalated the second line; and some of the German Legion actually gained the third. But the supports did not come up as promptly as they should have done; and the French governor, with a powerful reserve, rushed from the upper ground, drove the assailants beyond the outer line, and cleared the breaches. No troops could have fought more gallantly than the storming parties; but numbers prevailed over valour, and the attack consequently failed. The Allied loss on this unfortunate occasion was severe. The explosion of the mines had destroyed the greater part of the church of San Roman, and the assailants effected a lodgment among the ruins; but the following night the enemy sallied, drove out the picket, and for a short time obtained possession of the building. The ruins were once more cleared of the enemy, and a gallery commenced from the church against the second line—but the siege was virtually at an end. The troops had been gradually drawn to the front, in consequence of threatening movements of the French army, and on the 20th, Lord Wellington gave the command of the investing force to Major-General Pack, and joined the divisions which hitherto had covered the operations against the castle. On the evening of the 21st an official order was given to raise the siege. And thus a general of consummate abilities, and a victorious army, were obliged to retire unsuccessfully from before a third-rate fortress “strong in nothing but the skill and bravery of the governor and his gallant soldiers,” after (the casualties which occurred between the 18th and 21st being included, namely 96 killed and 160 wounded) sustaining a total loss of 509 officers and men killed and 160 wounded, and 1505 wounded or missing; a loss in numbers nearly equalling the garrison of the place.

The failure of Lord Wellington's attack on Burgos

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occasioned a powerful sensation in England when the news arrived that the siege had been abandoned, and the Allied army was in full retreat. The operations to reduce the castle were then freely canvassed, and many were found who pronounced the method of attack defective. Professional men, however, will find but little difficulty in determining the true causes of the failure. It was solely attributable to the deficiency of Lord Wellington's means; for the best authorities have agreed that the siege arrangements were ably planned. There were some officers who thought those means not judiciously applied. "Other modes and other points of attack were suggested, and even submitted to Lord Wellington; but they were all found to be the visionary schemes of men unacquainted with the details—beautiful as a whole, but falling to pieces on the slightest touch. His lordship condescended to receive the projects offered, analysed them, saw their fallacy, and rejected them."

Lord Wellington's personal superintendence of all the operations of this siege was untiring. The arrangements for each assault were written by his own hand as he sat upon the ground, observing the point of attack; and he was so much and so often exposed to fire, that his escape seemed almost miraculous. On the 29th of September he was in such imminent personal danger on his return from a close observation of the attack, that a field which he had to cross was literally ploughed up by grape and musketry as he passed down it. The abandonment of the siege was a measure which the combined movement of the French armies of the south and centre, under Soult and Joseph Bonaparte, rendered imperative.

The sufferings of the army on this retreat were intense, and the loss by all kinds of casualties considerable. The privations of the men were, indeed, hardly exceeded by those which the army of Sir John Moore was called upon to endure in the disastrous retreat to Corunna. Heavy rains fell almost without intermission; the roads were deep and miry, and even the fords of the rivers were breast-high. Arriving at their destined place of rest, wet, weary, and hungry, the soldiers were compelled to lie down on the saturated ground without the means of drying their

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dripping garments. The few fires they contrived to make were smoky and cheerless: many of the divisions had neither bread, biscuit, or flour; and the men had only a ration of lean overdriven beef, heated upon smoking ashes, and necessarily devoured half raw.

The British ministry had been tardy with their support and niggard in its amount. The military means of his Allies were feeble. Yet, in the face of disadvantages and discouragements which have rarely been experienced by any military commander; in the face, too, of armies mustering, whenever they chose to combine, nearly double the strength of the British and Portuguese forces, he had torn from them two fortresses, gained a pitched battle, had penetrated to the capital, driven away the intrusive king for a season, freed Andalusia from his power, and sapped the foundations of his throne.

For these services, the Earl of Wellington had been created by the Prince Regent, ever foremost to appreciate his achievements, a marquis; and in order to enable him to support this dignity, Parliament had voted him 100,000*l.* to purchase land. Of whatever cavils he may have been the object, his services were not wholly overlooked, and this recognition of them stimulated him in all probability to greater exertions, and had, moreover, the effect of silencing the murmurs of his accusers at home; and reinforcements, of cavalry more especially, which had always been wanting, were now conceded to him ungrudgingly.

Whilst Parliament and the nation were discussing the recent failures in the Peninsula, Lord Wellington was as busily employed in reorganizing and re-equipping his army, not overlooking the slightest details that seemed calculated to insure the comfort or discipline of his troops.

Every man capable of bearing arms was gathered to his regiment, and the internal economy of the army *matériel* for the ensuing campaign proportionately improved and increased. A fine pontoon-train was also completed; and a number of carts, specially adapted for the rough roads they had to traverse, were built for the use of the divisions. Light camp-kettles and tents added to the comforts of the soldiers, while hospitals were

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conveniently established in the rear, and *ambulances* organized to accompany the army to the field.

CHAPTER XVII

NOTHING could be more perfect than the skill with which Lord Wellington masked his intended operations. By the disposition of his corps, the formation of his magazines, and the false information he caused to be conveyed to the enemy, he misled the French generals, who saw so many plans open for his adoption, that it was impossible to guess that which he was most likely to select. He might turn their right by forcing the passage of Tormes on the Douro, or by Avila and the valley of the Tagus march direct upon Madrid. He might then choose the north for the scene of his operations; or he might move southward, and unite with the Anglo-Sicilian army under Murray. All these plans were probable; all were discussed by Joseph and his generals; but they failed in penetrating Lord Wellington's true designs, and the blow was struck before they could divine the quarter from which it might be expected.

Having prepared secretly, at different points between Lamego and the frontier, the means of transport, he threw five divisions of infantry and two brigades of cavalry across the Douro, and directed Sir Thomas Graham to take them through the province of Tras os Montes upon Zamora. Lord Wellington himself led two divisions of infantry, a corps of Spaniards, and a body of cavalry, on Salamanca; whilst Sir Rowland Hill brought his corps from Upper Estremadura, descended the Tormes above Alba, and advanced to the same point. The centre and right of the army were here united on the 25th of May. Lord Wellington calculated, by the rapidity of these movements, to disconcert any attempt of the enemy to interrupt his line of communication with Ciudad Rodrigo, and that they would be compelled to fall back upon the Ebro without a battle, when, leaving a Spanish corps to invest Burgos, and marching with the entire Anglo-

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Portuguese army, he could dislodge them from any defensive position they might have taken on that river, and drive them across the Pyrenees.

Lord Wellington quitted Freneda on the 22nd. On crossing the stream which divides the two nations, his mind, excited and elevated by associations which those plains presented to his mind, and confident of the result of his latest plans, he rose in his stirrups, and waving his hand, cried out : " Farewell, Portugal ! " This was the last time he looked upon the mountains of Beira. So complete was the delusion of the French general as to his tactics, that he retired precipitately towards Medina del Campo, as if to draw Wellington on, and expose him to attack from the bridges on the Douro at Zamora and Toro, on his left flank. All was now hurry, confusion, and uncertainty in the French cantonments. On the 31st of May, the greater part of the army operating on the north bank of the Douro crossed the Isla without opposition ; and the French having evacuated Zamora, and fallen back on Toro, destroying the bridges at both posts, Lord Wellington occupied the former place ; and the enemy abandoning Toro also, for Valladolid, he made it, on the 2nd of June, his head-quarters. A sharp cavalry skirmish took place near Morales, in which the 10th Hussars were particularly distinguished, taking 200 prisoners, with very trifling loss to themselves. The communication between the two wings of the army was now open. The bridge at Toro having been restored, the whole of the Allied armies had united across the river. On the 4th, Lord Wellington again moved forward ; the army at Madrid abandoned that capital, and, by a forced march, passed the river at the Ponte de Douro, and joined the army of Portugal. The boldness and celerity of Lord Wellington's movements alarmed and confounded the French, who, being unable to dispute his advance, evacuating Valladolid and Ponte de Douro, retired behind the Carrion.

On the 7th, the Allies crossed that river, established head-quarters at Amaico, and drove the French behind the Hornmaza. On the three following days the left wing was brought forward, and the entire army crossed the Pisuerga, Lord Wellington shifting his head-quarters

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to Castro Xerez, about eighteen miles west of Burgos. Here commissariat cares demanded a day's halt. On the 12th of June, Lord Wellington made a strong reconnaissance with the corps of Sir Rowland Hill and all the cavalry, and dislodging the French troops from behind Hormaza, drove them back upon the main body. Early the next morning, having partially destroyed the defences of Burgos, he marched to Miranda, placing a garrison in the lofty and strong castle of Pancorbo, which commands the main road to Navarre. On the 16th the enemy were once more behind the Ebro, having been driven thither without having been allowed to retain, for more than a few hours, any one of the various defensible posts upon their route. On that day and the next the Allies continued their march without opposition, and it was not until the 18th that the light division came suddenly upon two French brigades, on their march to Vittoria. These troops were vigorously attacked, and lost nearly 300 men. The advice which had been given to Joseph Bonaparte was, to abandon the great road to France, and march for Navarre by the right bank of the Ebro, with the view of uniting with Suchet; but Joseph, having reckoned on forming a junction with Clausel, and having an enormous quantity of valuable plunder in his train, decided on retiring on Vittoria, in which neighbourhood he arrived on the night of the 19th, and having concentrated all his forces, placed them in readiness for battle.

At daybreak on the 21st, the second convoy, in which the king's baggage was included, left Vittoria, under the protection of the division of Maucune. Its extent was immense; and as it wound through the beautiful valley which the road to Irun traverses, the train of carriages and waggons appeared interminable. Every preparation was made for the approaching conflict, and the final dispositions of the French armies were leisurely completed.

The army of Portugal, reinforced from that of the south, formed the French right wing, commanding the roads from Bilbao and Durango, where they cross the Zadorra by the bridges of Gamara Mayor and Ariaga. Here the river, turning round the heights of Margarita at a sharp angle, presented for the French centre a new front.

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This was occupied by the army of the south,—their centre across the royal causeway in front of Ariñez, whilst the right appeared on a bold knoll above the hamlet of Margarita, and the left extended behind Subijana de Alava; its flank protected by Maransin's brigade, which occupied the heights of Puebla. The army of the centre was placed in reserve; the royal guard, a number of guns, and the most of the French cavalry, being massed around the village of Gomecha. Batteries overlooked the bridges, and commanded all the passages of the Zadorra. Although the position selected by Marshal Jourdan was generally strong, and well chosen to effect the objects for which he risked a battle, still it had one material defect;—its great extent would permit many simultaneous efforts to be made by an attacking army; and accordingly, on the following day, the Allied leader, with admirable skill, availed himself of this advantage.

Such were the grand dispositions of the enemy—and in none of the Peninsular battles were nicer combinations required than for its attack. That was to be made on many points; and to be effective, the most exact calculations as to time and movements were indispensable. It was impossible for Lord Wellington to bring up to an immediate proximity for attack every portion of his numerous army; and hence, many of his brigades had bivouacked on the preceding night a considerable distance from the Zadorra. Part of the country before Vittoria was difficult and rocky; hamlets, enclosures, and ravines, separated the columns from each other; hence some of them were obliged to move by narrow and broken roads—and arrangements, perfect in themselves, were liable to embarrassment from numerous contingencies. But the genius that directed these extended operations could remedy fortuitous events, should such occur.

The entire of the 20th was occupied by the French marshal in his dispositions for battle; and by the Allied general in a careful reconnaissance of the ground. Satisfied now that the king would fight on the Zadorra, which had hitherto been doubtful, Lord Wellington recalled Giron with the Gallician army, which he had detached to take possession of Orduna, countermanded Graham's

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supporting movement, and hurried up the rear of the columns, with the exception of the 6th division, which was left at Medina del Pombar to protect the advance of the magazines. On the night of the 20th the Allies were ably disposed upon the Bayas. The second and light divisions, the Spanish and Portuguese corps under Morillo and the Conde d'Amarante, formed the right of the allied army, and bivouacked in front of Puebla de Arlanzon, and in advance of the river. The right centre, comprising the fourth division, with the hussars and D'Urban's brigades, were also on the left of the river, but separated from the right wing by a mountain range that extended from the Bayas to the Zadorra. The left centre, including the 3rd and 7th divisions, was still on the right bank of the river at the distance of a league; and the left wing, composed of the 1st and 5th divisions, Pack's and Bradford's Portuguese, and Longa's Spanish corps, with the remainder of the cavalry, were assembled at Murguia, on the left bank of the Bayas, and six miles still farther up the stream.

In numerical strength, the advantage was with Lord Wellington; in military composition, it remained with Joseph Bonaparte. Deducting the 6th division left at Medina del Pombar, the Allies had 60,000 Anglo-Portuguese, with 20,000 Spanish troops, upon the field. Of this force 10,000 were cavalry; and the artillery had 90 pieces of cannon. The French were inferior by 10,000; but in cavalry they were stronger; and in artillery, superior by sixty pieces. As an army, nothing could be more imposing—the variety of colour and costume forming a striking contrast to the simpler uniforms of the Allies. But the appearance of the whole was soldierly—the cavalry was superb—the guns, caissons, and their appointments were perfect; and the horses, attached to every arm, in excellent condition.

Before daybreak on the morning of the 21st the French army was in position, and the British and their auxiliaries were in march to attack it. The Allies approached the bridges of the Zadorra in four columns: Sir Rowland Hill, with the right wing, marched by Puebla; Wellington, with the right centre, to which the

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light division had been attached, advanced to Nanclares; the left centre made a circuitous movement, to seize the bridges of Tres Puntas and Mendoza; while Graham, with the left wing, marched by the Bilbao road, to gain the bridge which crosses the river between the villages of Abecchuco and Ariaga. The mists still hung upon the mountains, and as yet the movements of both armies were concealed. At nine o'clock the fog cleared, and in brilliant sunshine "battle's magnificent array" was suddenly and splendidly exhibited. At dawn of day Joseph placed himself upon a height that overlooked his right and centre. He was attended by a numerous staff, and protected by his own body-guard. Wellington chose an eminence in front of the village of Ariñez, commanding the right bank of the Zadorra, and continued there observing the progress of the fight, and directing the movements of his divisions, as calmly as if he were inspecting the evolutions of a review. An hour passed—Sir Rowland Hill had not come up—and Wellington's frequent glances towards the Puebla showed how anxiously he was expected. A spattering fire was heard in that direction—musketry succeeded—smoke-wreaths went curling up the mountain—and announced that the 2nd division had come up, and that the work of slaughter had begun.

Vittoria, in Ossian's language, might have been described as "a day of battles;" for the different attacks of the Allied columns, though all tending to one grand result, respectively produced close and sanguinary combats. War has its picturesque—and the opening of the battle of Vittoria was singularly imposing. "Not a drum was heard"—a wide expanse of rich and varied landscape on which an artist would have gazed with rapture, was reposing in a flood of sunshine. From a great eminence in front of Ariñez, the whole array of Joseph's army was visible; and on that height the Allied staff were collected. There, Lord Wellington was standing, dressed plainly in a grey frock coat, with nothing to mark commanding rank, except a Spanish sash and the hat and feathers of a field officer. His telescope at one moment wandered over the extensive position occupied

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by the enemy, and the next, turned with fixed earnestness upon that point from whence he expected the crash of battle to burst. The spattering fire of the French light troops opened from the side of the mountain, while Morillo's corps, debouching from the woods that clothed the bottom of the Sierra, brought on a heavy and sustained fire, which announced that the heights were boldly attacked and as obstinately defended. The Spanish efforts to carry them were brave, but unsuccessful. The fusillade continued, and the enemy remained unshaken. In a few minutes more, the smoke-wreath which had risen steadily over the summit of the mountain, gradually commenced receding—and Cadogan's brigade, moving along the ridge, was seen advancing with that imposing steadiness which ever gives assurance of success. The hill was won—but, alas! on its summit lay their chivalrous leader; and till the haze of death had closed his sight, there, at his own request, he remained to “look his last” upon the battle. For a long time the fight was doubtful, as on each side reinforcements came into action. But when Hill, clearing the defile of La Puebla, seized the village of Subijana de Alava, the enemy's repeated efforts to win back their lost ground, though vigorously continued, proved unavailing.

Meanwhile, on the extreme left, Graham's artillery was faintly heard, and told that there also the conflict had begun, while the light division, under the guidance of a peasant, crossed the Zadorra by Tres Puentes, and boldly established itself under a crested height on which the French line of battle had been formed. Before the bridge of Nandaus, the 4th division was waiting until the 3rd and 7th should arrive. Presently, Picton and Lord Dalhousie appeared, and the whole of the Allied columns moved rapidly to their respective objects of attack. The 3rd division crossed the river by the bridge of Mendoza and a ford—the 7th, with a light brigade, followed closely—the 4th division was already on the other side—Hill was pushing the enemy back—and on the left the thunder of his guns redoubled, and showed that Graham was advancing rapidly into action. Nothing could be more beautiful than the military spectacle these simultaneous

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movements exhibited. The passage of the river—the movement of glittering masses from right to left, far as the eye could range—the deafening roar of cannon—the sustained fusillade of infantry—were all grand and imposing; while the English cavalry, displayed in glorious sunshine, and formed in line to support the columns, completed a *coup d'œil* magnificent beyond description.

The subsequent advance of the Allied columns against the enemy's right centre was beautifully executed, as, in echelons of regiments, it crossed that hallowed ground on which tradition placed the chivalry of England, when the Black Prince delivered battle to Henry the Bastard, and by a decisive victory replaced Don Pedro on the throne. As if animated by some glorious impulse, the battalions advanced, "not to combat but to conquer." Colville's brigade of "the fighting 3rd" led the attack, and the first of the enemy's corps that confronted it was gallantly defeated. "Pressing on with characteristic impetuosity, and without halting to correct the irregularity a recent and successful struggle had occasioned, the brigade encountered on the brow of the hill two lines of French infantry, regularly drawn up and prepared to receive their assailants. For a moment the result was regarded with considerable apprehension, and means were adopted by Lord Wellington for sustaining the brigade, when—as that event seemed inevitable—it should be repulsed by the enemy. But valour overcame every disadvantage, and the perfect formation of the French could not withstand the dashing onset of the assailants. Their rush was irresistible—on went these daring soldiers, sweeping before them the formidable array that, circumstanced as they were, appeared calculated to produce annihilation. The day was evidently with the Allies; but the French, covered by a swarm of skirmishers and the fire of fifty guns, retired on their reserves, which were posted in front of Gomecha.

The village of Arriñez now became the scene of a severe conflict; and from its importance, this advanced post was desperately maintained. Checked in his assault, after having seized three pieces of artillery and a howitzer,

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Picton returned lion-like to the charge, and with the 45th and 74th regiments, drove the French at the bayonet's point fairly through the village. Defeated thus in front, and their left flank turned at Subijana de Alava, the wreck of the armies of the south and centre made a last stand between the villages of Ali and Armentia, while that of Portugal still bravely maintained itself on the upper Zadorra. But this final struggle was succeeded by a total *déroute*. The left wing of the Allies was furiously engaged; and the heights of Abecchuco, the village of the same name, and the bridge at Gamarra Mayor, were all successively attacked, and all carried in splendid style after being desperately defended. The contest was now ended—the southern and central armies were seen in full retreat by the road on the right of Vittoria leading towards Salvatierra—the Allies were advancing on every point—the enemy's confusion increased momentarily,—the guns were abandoned, and the drivers and horses went off at speed. The soldiers pressed wildly through a road already choked with the refugees from the capital and the countless vehicles which accompanied their flight; and a scene of indescribable disorder ensued.

“The sun was setting, and his last rays fell upon a magnificent spectacle. Red masses of infantry were seen advancing steadily across the plain—the horse-artillery at a gallop to the front, to open its fire on the fugitives—the hussar brigade charging by the Camino Real—while the 2nd division, having overcome every obstacle, and driven the enemy from its front, was extending over the heights upon the right, in line, its arms and appointments flashing gloriously in the fading sunshine of departing day.”

Never was a victory more complete, nor an army so thoroughly disorganized as the beaten one. Joseph's inglorious retreat was effected with difficulty; for Captain Wyndham observing his flight, and riding with a squadron of the 10th Hussars after the fugitive king, overtook and fired at his carriage. Obligated to save himself on horseback, he effected his escape under the protection of an escort, too powerful for his daring pursuers to attack. Nothing, however, but his person was rescued; for his

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coach, and every valuable it contained, fell into the hands of the conquerors.

Night closed upon the victors and the vanquished; and darkness and broken ground favoured the escape of battalions flying from the field in mob-like disorder, and incapable of any resistance had they been overtaken and attacked. Two leagues from Vittoria the pursuit was abandoned; but the horse-artillery, while its fire could reach the fugitives, continued to harass the retreat by a discharge of shells and round shot. Reluctantly, Lord Wellington returned to the city, which he entered about nine in the evening. Two nights before, Vittoria displayed a blaze of light in honour of King Joseph's presence: now all betrayed panic and confusion—every door was closed—every lattice darkened, while a solitary lantern placed in front of each house gave to the streets a sombre and mournful appearance.

During the progress of the battle, three leagues over a difficult surface had to be traversed; and the long summer-day was consumed in an unremitting succession of laborious exertions. Night, however, was not to the wearied conquerors a season of repose: for property, in value and variety such as no modern army had abandoned, presented itself at every step, and the work of plunder commenced before the fire of musketry and cannon had ended. The camp of every division was like a fair; benches were laid from waggon to waggon, and there the soldiers held an auction through the night, and disposed of such booty as had fallen to their share to any who were inclined to purchase it. Even dollars became an article of sale—for as they were too heavy to be carried in great numbers, eight were offered for a guinea.

It was, however, reserved for the dawn of morning to display the extent of the spoil which the beaten army had been obliged to leave at the disposal of their conquerors; and the country in front of Vittoria for several leagues exhibited a scene which has rarely been equalled. There lay the wreck of a mighty army; and plunder, accumulated during the French successes, and wrung from every part of Spain with unsparing rapacity, was recklessly abandoned to those who chose to seize it. Cannons and

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caissons—carriages and tumbrils—waggons of every description—all were overturned; and a stranger *mélange* could not be imagined, than that which these enormous ambulances presented to the eye. Here, was the personal baggage of a king—there, the scenery and decorations of a theatre—munitions of war were mixed with articles of *vertu*—and scattered arms, drums, silks, embroidery, plate, and jewels, mingled in the strangest disorder. One waggon was loaded with money; another, with cartridges—while wounded soldiers, deserted women, and children of every age, everywhere implored assistance, or threw themselves for protection on the humanity of the victors. Here, a lady had been overtaken in her carriage—in the next calash was an actress or fille-de-chambre,—while droves of oxen were roaming over the plain, intermingled with an endless number of sheep, goats, mules, horses, asses, and cows. With the most lamentable confusion the grotesque was also ridiculously combined; camp-followers were arrayed in the state uniforms of Joseph's court; and the coarsest females who accompany a camp, drunk with champagne, and bedecked "in silken attire," flaunted in Parisian dresses which had been envied by the denizens of a palace.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE retreats of the French armies were so rapid that the pursuit of Joseph Bonaparte, renewed upon the 22nd by Lord Wellington, as well as that continued on the 23rd by Sir Thomas Graham, into Guipuscoa, by the pass of Adrian, failed either in overtaking the wreck of the army that accompanied the king, or in cutting off Clausel from the pass of Jaca, whence he was hastily retiring, on hearing of the total defeat of the armies he was advancing to support. The left corps of the army, under Sir Thomas Graham, marched from the field in the direction of Bilbao, to intercept the French force under General Foy, but that officer, having gained Tolosa, barricaded the streets, and attempted to make a stand. He was, however, soon dislodged by Sir Thomas, who, having driven

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him beyond the frontier, destroyed the *tête de pont* at Irun.

Whilst the two divisions under Sir Rowland Hill were pursuing the enemy on the road to Pampeluna, Lord Wellington directed a force on Logrono to attack Clausel, who saved them that trouble by decamping. His Lordship had, however, pushed three divisions to Tudela, to cut off his retreat to France by that road. Lord Wellington established his head-quarters at Oyarzun on the 24th, and writing that day to his brother at Cadiz, says:—"King Joseph and his army must quit Spain: indeed, they have already retired to Pampeluna. I am trying to cut off some of the others, and shall try to turn them all out of Spain before they can be reinforced." Foy fell back to a strong position in front of Tolosa, but was soon dislodged, when he drew off to Irun. A brigade of the army of Castaños, led by the general, drove the French rear-guard from its last position on the Spanish soil, and forced it across the Bidassoa by the bridge of Irun. In consequence of these successful operations of the left wing, the garrison of Passages surrendered on the 30th; and on the following day the forts of Guetaria and Castro Urdiales were abandoned, their garrisons proceeding by sea to St. Sebastian and Santona respectively. Numerous ports were thus opened to British shipping, whence easy access was gained to the interior of the country.

Having thus freed himself from all apprehensions for his left, Lord Wellington now turned his attention to Clausel's corps on his rear and right, to which King Joseph had sent perplexing orders to join with all speed, first at Burgos, then on the Ebro, and lastly at Vittoria. When Clausel arrived at Logrono, he found that the position of Joseph had been turned on the upper point of that river, and that he was commencing his retreat upon Vittoria. Ignorant of the state of affairs, Clausel had lingered on the Ebro at San Vicente until the 20th, when, ascertaining the direction the king had taken, he pressed after him to that place; but learning, on the 21st, the extent of the catastrophe, he retraced his steps to Logrono, whence, after some days of irresolution, he descended the Ebro, and reached Tudela on the 27th.

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Believing him to be still at Logrono, and leaving Sir Rowland Hill to direct the operations before Pampeluna, Lord Wellington marched on the 27th towards Tudela, with the 4th, 7th, and light divisions, and two brigades of cavalry, directing Lieutenant-General Clinton to advance with the 5th and 6th divisions, the household brigade of cavalry, and the Spanish horse of the army of Andalusia, by way of Salvatierra and Vittoria, to resist Clausel's corps, if it should attempt to force a passage on that side. The French general, however, having heard of the movements of the Allies, continued his retreat with his army, 14,000 strong, to the eastward, and reached Zaragoza on the 1st of July, where he left behind him all his artillery. Lord Wellington, satisfied with compelling him to retire beyond the frontier, desisted from the pursuit. The town was occupied at this juncture by 3000 of Suchet's corps, commanded by General Paris, who, finding himself in a somewhat perilous position, determined to sally forth and recover his communication with Suchet, leaving a bare garrison in the castle. Mina had, however, obtained possession of the road through which he must pass; and after a vain attempt to force a passage, he was obliged to turn northwards, and follow Clausel's footsteps, gaining the gorges of the Pyrenees by Huesca and Jaca, with the loss of all his artillery, the greater part of his baggage, and some of his troops. The castle of Zaragoza, invested by Mina, held out until the 2nd of August. The loss of this place, with the stores and artillery it contained, gave the *coup de grâce* to the combined movement of the two great armies against Lord Wellington.

On the 1st of July the head-quarters of the Allied army were again established near Pampeluna, which it was Lord Wellington's intention to have besieged had he possessed the necessary means and appliances. On that day the strong castle of Pancorbo, between Burgos and Miranda, had surrendered to the Spanish army, the garrison consisting of 700 picked soldiers. The French also evacuated Castro and Guetaria, taking off their garrisons in boats. Thus, in every quarter of the Ebro, the fortified posts were surrendered to the Allies. On the 6th of July Marshal Suchet broke up from Valencia, and on the 7th

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the last division of Joseph's army was driven beyond the Pyrenees. Sir Rowland Hill had followed them the whole way to Pampeluna, and attacked them whenever they halted; whilst Lord Dalhousie, with the 7th division, had menaced their right. By these vigorous operations Lord Wellington had become master of the passes of San Estevan, Donna Maria Mayo, and Roncesvalles. In forty-five days from the opening of this campaign he had led the Allied arm from the frontiers of Portugal to the French border; marching 500 miles without a check. He had defeated the combined forces of the enemy in a general action, taking all their artillery, and had driven them from one strong post to another, till, shorn of his enormous booty, the usurper king was hunted from the soil of Spain.

He now prepared to besiege San Sebastian. The battering-train was accordingly ordered round from Bilbao to Passages, and such dispositions made of the Allied troops as would shield the besiegers from the chance of interruption.

After a reconnoissance, the operations of the siege commenced on the 11th. Upwards of 300 engineers and 500 artillerymen were present. Forty pieces of artillery of various calibre had been collected, and were at a subsequent period of the siege increased to 117. The results of the battle of Vittoria had rendered San Sebastian an object of paramount importance to the French. On the 22nd of June the convoy under General Rey reached the city, and was directed to remain and form its garrison. The new commandant compelled the unfortunate refugees to continue their journey into France, without protection, at the risk of falling into the hands of the Partidas, who would have shown them no mercy. Foy, during his retreat, left a reinforcement on the 27th; and on the 1st of July the garrison was further increased by that of Guateria and a detachment of artillery and artificers from St. Jean de Luz. Thus upwards of 3000 men were collected for its defence; having seventy-six heavy guns on the works, to which several additions were afterwards made by sea. So imperfect was the coast blockade of the British naval force, that the French were not only

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enabled to receive supplies, but were allowed to send off their wounded men without any molestation from our cruisers.

The siege, by Lord Wellington's orders, was vigorously carried on; and the batteries, being completed and armed on the 14th, opened on the convent of San Bartholomeo and the redoubt. The fire was rapid and well-directed; and, next day, the south end of the church was beaten down, but though the roof was frequently in flames, they were extinguished by the exertions of the defenders. On the 16th a breach was practicable in the front of the building, and on the 17th, the end of the convent and part of the garden wall being laid open, at ten in the morning the convent and redoubt were assaulted and carried by the 9th regiment, three companies of the Royals, and a detachment of the Cazadores. The French fought obstinately; but the gallantry of the assailants rendered a brave defence unavailing; and the enemy were driven in confusion down the hill, carrying a strong reinforcement just sent from San Sebastian along with them in their flight through the burnt village of San Martin. Unfortunately the impetuosity of the troops when in pursuit could not be restrained by the exertions of the superior officers, who had received Major-General Oswald's directions not to pass San Martin; and considerable loss was sustained by those who followed the enemy to the foot of the glacis, on their return to San Martin. In this affair the French lost 250 men; and the British casualties amounted nearly to 100.

Two batteries were thrown up during the night in a situation to enfilade and take in reverse the defences of the town. "This, in the loose sand, was a most difficult work, and the fire of the enemy was directed with great precision to interrupt it; four sentinels were killed in succession through one loophole. The only eminence from which artillery could be brought to bear directly on the town, though still about a hundred feet below it, was above the convent, and almost adjoining its walls. Here a battery was erected; the covered-way to it passed through the convent, and the battery itself was constructed in a thickly peopled burial ground. A more

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ghastly circumstance can seldom have occurred in war;—for coffins and corpses in all stages of decay were exposed when the soil was thrown up to form a defence against the fire from the town, and were used, indeed, in the defences; and when a shell burst there, it brought down living and the dead together. An officer was giving his orders, when a shot struck the edge of the trenches above him; two coffins slipped down upon him with the sand, the coffins broke in their fall, the bodies rolled with him for some distance, and when he recovered he saw that they had been women of some rank, for they were richly attired in black velvet, and their long hair hung about their shoulders and their livid faces. The soldiers, in the scarcity of firewood, being nothing nice, broke up coffins for fuel with which to dress their food, leaving the bodies exposed; and till the hot sun had dried up these poor insulted remains of humanity, the stench was as dreadful as the sight.”

“The operations of the siege were rapidly continued; and on the 20th the whole of the batteries opened their fire. It was a singular coincidence that the breaching-point selected by the British engineer should have been the spot chosen by Marshal Berwick nearly a century before. It was, however, unfortunately, stronger now than any other portion of the masonry, as it had been additionally secured when the damages occasioned by the former siege were repaired. But the fire from the fortress was much feebler than was expected; and as it was entirely directed against the battery employed in breaching, it was apparent from the commencement of the operation that the garrison wished to spare their ammunition, as they scarcely ever fired at working-parties bringing shot, etc.; and at this time many of their shells, which, having been thrown with great correctness, might have done much mischief, were not loaded with sufficient powder to burst them. Many shells, which exploded with their fuses downwards, were observed to spring up merely a few feet from the ground, and fall again harmlessly, almost on the same spot.”

Both the artillery of the besiegers and the besieged began now to give evidence of failure; and many guns on

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the works of San Sebastian were observed at every discharge to give the double explosion which generally attends an enlargement of the vent. Indeed, the wonder was that any metal could support the heavy fire maintained by the besiegers. On the 22nd the expenditure from the breaching battery alone amounted to 3500 rounds: which, for ten guns in action, averaged 350 rounds a gun, expended in about fifteen and a half hours of daylight. Such a rate of firing was probably never equalled at any siege, great accuracy of range being at the same time observed. The fire of the place was now very inconsiderable, but the garrison, whose proceedings were visible from No. 11 battery on Mount Olia, were observed to be unremitting in their exertions in placing sand-bags, and in preparing interior defences against the moment of the assault.

On the evening of the 23rd the breaches were reported practicable, and the assault was consequently ordered to be given. In the rear of the great breach, however, the houses had taken fire; and they burned so furiously that it was deemed advisable to defer the storm for another day, and employ the interval in opening another breach between the main one and the half-bastion of St. John. That delay was not neglected by General Rey; and, unfortunately, it afforded ample time for completing his means of resistance. On a cavalier in the centre of the land front, and commanding the high curtain, two additional guns were mounted to assist the fire of one still serviceable, on the hornwork, and two that were in casemates on the flank. Two other field-pieces were mounted on an entrenchment which, crossing the ditch of the land front, bore on the approaches to the main breach; a 24-pounder looked from the tower of Las Mesquitas, between the main breach and where the third opening was being made, and consequently flanking both; two four-pounders were in the tower of Hornos; two heavy guns were on the flank of St. Elmo, and two others, placed on the right of the Mirador, could play upon the breaches from within the fortified line of Monte Orgullo. Thus fourteen pieces were still available for defence; the retaining sea-wall, or *fausse-braye*, which strengthened the flank of the

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hornwork, and between which and the river the storming parties must necessarily advance, was covered with live shells to roll over on the columns; and behind the flaming houses near the breach, other edifices were loopholed and filled with musketeers.

On the night of the 24th the storming parties, amounting to about two thousand men of the 5th division, entered the trenches on the isthmus; and on the explosion of a mine formed in the extremity of a conduit that connected an aqueduct with the town, the assailants rushed forward.

At first, the assault promised complete success. The counterscarp and glacis of the hornwork were blown in, and the French abandoned the flank parapet, while those at the main breach also fell back behind the burning houses. The storming parties were nobly led. Major Frazer and the engineer officer topped the breach; and with the greatest gallantry, but in broken order, many of the soldiers followed them. The attack, however, was irregular, and consequently inefficient. The boldest pressed to the summit of the breach; but there a sheer descent presented itself, while flames and smoke burst from the burning houses in their front, "and awed the stoutest;"—but the greater number of the assailants stopped at the demi-bastion, and unwisely opened their musketry, and returned the fusillade from the ramparts. That was a fatal error: the enemy rallied—manned the loop-holed houses commanding the great breach, and from front and flank opened a destructive fire on the stormers and their support, which darkness and local difficulties had paralyzed in its advance. With restored confidence, the French, from every quarter, poured death upon the column. Shells from the citadel—grape from the flank defences—grenades and musketry from the houses, increased the panic and added to the slaughter. The regiments intermixed—and the confusion became, consequently, irremediable. In vain the leading officers partially rallied the troops and set them a glorious example. For a while, in one dense mass, confined between the hornwork and the river, unable to advance and unwilling to retire, the assailants steadily remained—but it was only to be slaughtered—till the chances of succeeding became

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so desperate, that those who survived reluctantly gave way and returned to the trenches.

The attack seems to have been, in many respects, imperfectly arranged, and more confusedly delivered. Its postponement was injudicious. There was no object to be obtained—and soldiers, right or wrong, always draw their inferences. The impression was accordingly conveyed, that either the means of attack were insufficient, or the defences stronger than had been supposed. The tide calculations for the 21th were not suited for a day's delay. The water was consequently higher; and while the space beneath the walls was contracted, darkness increased the difficulty of making a well-combined assault. Worse still, the batteries on the sand-hills continued their discharges of grape, which fell heavily on the assailants as they were advancing; while the Portuguese, who reached the ditch in perfect order, were unable to escalate, as ladders had not been provided for the purpose. The failure of the assault on San Sebastian was in every respect an unfortunate event; and the casualties were unusually severe. Five engineer officers, including their invaluable chief (Sir Richard Fletcher), with 44 officers of the line and 520 men, were killed, wounded, or made prisoners.

As soon as it became fully daylight the garrison proposed a truce for an hour, which, being agreed to, they moved the wounded from the foot of the escarp wall into the place. On the expiration of the truce, the batteries recommenced a regular fire on the breach to prevent its being cleared or further retrenched, which fire was maintained uninterruptedly throughout the day.

On the following day Lord Wellington came over from Lesaca. His intention was to push on the siege vigorously; but the great expenditure of ammunition, and the insufficiency of the heavy ordnance, induced him to postpone his operations until an ample supply of siege-artillery and stores should arrive, as expected from England. He made, however, all necessary arrangements for the future operations, and after some consideration, it was decided to persevere in the same plan of attack; but with the increased ordnance to enlarge the breach from its left

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extremity to the salient angle of the left demi-bastion of the land front; and by the fire of additional batteries, containing seven 24-pounders and four 8-inch howitzers to be established on the isthmus, to carry the breach from the salient angle of that bastion along its face to the end of the high curtain above it, so as to form one enormous opening or ascent of at least 100 yards. Further, his lordship becoming acquainted with the general discouragement of the troops employed in the operation, and not being altogether satisfied with the recent assault, arranged that a body of volunteers should be obtained from the army generally, to bear the brunt of the next storming of the breaches; and in the meantime the trenches were to be held by a guard of 800 men.

Other circumstances, besides a scarcity of ammunition, obliged Lord Wellington to substitute a blockade for a siege. Soult was concentrating in front of the passes, and the Allied force would have been unequal to shut up Pampeluna, invest San Sebastian, and afford an army of sufficient strength to cover the double operation. Accordingly orders were issued to disarm the batteries, and with the exception of four pieces, remove the guns to Passages. While this was being effected, the garrison made a successful sortie, in which they surprised and carried off 250 Portuguese and a few British soldiers.

On the night of the 14th, after Lord Wellington had returned from San Sebastian, a report was brought him that the enemy had overpowered his troops at two of the passes on the right of his army, had penetrated into the valleys of the Pyrenees in great force, and were pressing onwards to Pampeluna. "We must do the best we can to stop them," was his laconic reply. With this day began the difficult movements and severe combats in the Pyrenees which lasted until the 1st of August.

Soult's right and left wings were at St. Jean Pied-de-Port, 40,000 strong, which he led in person to attack the passes of Roncesvalles; whilst at the same moment D'Erlon, with 15,000 men, advanced from Espelette towards the passes of Maya. Villatte, who commanded the reserve 10,000 strong, occupied the entrenched camp of Urogne, in advance of St. Jean de Luz, with instructions

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to act as circumstances might dictate. Intrenched camps had been formed around Bayonne and St. Jean Pied-de-Port. On the 25th, Soult directed in person the opening of a series of attacks, as remarkable for the skill and bravery with which they were made, as for the dauntless gallantry with which they were repulsed.

Hostilities were commenced by Clausel against the pass of Roncesvalles. Another column, led by Reille, followed a mountain-path up the Val Carlos, and climbed the steep sides of Mount Arola to turn that pass. At break of day the advanced pickets of the 4th division discovered that the enemy were close upon them, a Spanish post in front having been made prisoners without firing a shot; and shortly afterwards the enemy's troops, crowning the summit of the mountain, opened a galling fire on the 20th regiment. A single company of that regiment sufficed to drive away the French skirmishers; but on gaining the ridge of the hill, it came suddenly, face to face, upon the head of the enemy's column, which had just gained the summit. The French officers called out to the British company to lay down their arms, but the gallant little band cried out in return, "Bayonet away! Bayonet away!" and never was that formidable weapon used with better effect. The enemy were driven down the hill without firing a shot. Being far distant from support, this handful of brave men fell back; but their exploit gave time for the brigade to form, and the engagement then became most severe. The enemy continued to gain ground until the 4th division was brought up, when they were held in check at all points, notwithstanding their immense superiority.

The attack of Clausel had been met with equal resolution. Major-General Byng had taken post with his brigade in advance of the principal pass of Roncesvalles, to cover another gorge leading to Orbaizete, where Morillo's Spaniards were placed; but becoming shaken by the progress of Reille's column along the summit of Mount Arola, withdrew, thereby uncovering the road to Orbaizete. Here he maintained his ground, the flank march of the enemy having been arrested by the 4th division; but Sir Lowry Cole, considering that the loss of the pass on

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his extreme right rendered his position no longer tenable, drew off the whole of his troops during the night to Lincoan, where they were joined by a Portuguese brigade. Sir Thomas Picton, having ascertained that Sir Lowry Cole expected to be attacked by Soult's whole force on the following morning, marched the 3rd division from Olague to his support, and effected a junction with him on the 26th; but Soult's overwhelming force rendered a further retreat a matter of necessity. Picton, however, faced about in a manner which kept the French continually at bay. In the afternoon of that day he drew up his force in front of Zubiri, and held the enemy in check until nightfall, when the retreat was continued in the best possible order. On the 27th he again retired, and took up a position designed to cover the blockade of Pampeluna. Lord Wellington hastened to the scene of action, and reached a little village at the foot of the mountain which formed their right just as the French were descending to take possession of it. Having issued his orders, he had only left it as the French were pouring into it, and joined Picton at Huarte, about five miles from Pampeluna, where he was received with the greatest enthusiasm. It is a remarkable fact, that of twenty British regiments engaged on this day, twelve had taken part in the battle of Talavera.

Lord Wellington made no alteration in Picton's dispositions. The 3rd division was drawn up on the right in front of Huarte; the 4th, the brigade of General Byng, and the Portuguese of General Campbell, occupied the left. They were posted in front of Villalba. The Spanish troops of Morillo and O'Donnell were in reserve. The British cavalry under Sir Stapleton Cotton were placed near Huarte on the right, that being the only ground on which they could act at all. Soult's army was formed on the ridge of the mountain opposite to the Allies. On the 27th he attacked the hill on the right of the 4th division, occupied by one Portuguese and one Spanish battalion, but was repulsed. The only advantage gained by the enemy on this day, although their numbers doubled those of the Allies, was the possession of the villages of Sorauren and Ostiz, on the Bayonne road, by which the

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communication between the right and centre of the Allied army was cut off.

Before the 6th division, by which Lord Wellington had been reinforced, had had time to take up its position, Soult marched against it with a strong force from Soracuren, but was repulsed with heavy loss. A general attack followed along the whole range of heights, which was kept up for several hours with great fury, with only temporary advantage on the part of the enemy over a Portuguese regiment. Lord Wellington, however, directed the 27th and 48th regiments to charge with the bayonet, when the enemy was driven down the hill with great slaughter. The 6th division having now moved forward, the enemy, after a faint attempt to gain the hill commanding the Roncesvalles road, gave up the contest. Throughout the whole of this day, Lord Wellington moved about wherever the battle raged the hottest, and finally sat down upon the ground "exposed within musket-range," to watch the progress of the battle. Several officers of his staff were wounded, and a ball striking the Marquis of Worcester's sword-belt, threw him from his horse, glanced off, and grazed Lord Wellington; but here, as at Vittoria, where, in the heat of the battle, he rode through the fire of eighty guns, he passed through the entire day without injury.

On the 29th both armies rested on their arms, waiting only for reinforcements to renew the combat. D'Erlon, under cover of his feigned attack upon the Portuguese, having brought up the greater part of his force, by a mountain-track, from Espelette, suddenly rushed forward, and overthrew the defenders of the pass of Aretesque. Captain Moyle Sherer, who commanded the advanced pickets, offered a gallant resistance; and though without any adequate support maintained his ground for a considerable time. The 34th and 50th charging with the bayonet, repulsed the first assailants, but were on the point of being overpowered by numbers, when the 92nd came to their rescue, and were nearly annihilated in their turn. So fierce was the struggle that the French admit a loss of 1,500 on this point alone; but at length numbers prevailed, and the British troops were compelled to give way, with

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a loss of four guns and 140 prisoners; the whole falling back towards Elizondo. Meanwhile, Sir Rowland Hill having arrived on the ground, reinforced by the 7th division from the pass of Echalar, the Allies became the aggressors, forced the enemy back to the passes, and before nightfall recovered the post which was the key of the original position. Hearing, however, that Sir Lowry Cole had fallen back from Roncesvalles, Sir Rowland Hill was compelled to make a corresponding movement in order to keep up his communication with the right wing, and fall back to Bercieta. The next day D'Erlon was deterred from moving beyond the passes of Maya. Sir Rowland Hill having maintained his ground during that day, retired, in obedience to his instructions, from the valley of Baztan on Pampeluna. On the same day the 7th division also reached Lezasso from Sumbilla, and continuing its march to Murcalain, took post between Hill's corps and Lord Wellington's position, covering Pampeluna: D'Erlon's corps following Hill's movement as far as Lunz, effected its junction with Soult's army.

It is impossible for us to enter into full details of these various combats and operations; suffice it to say that, although many sanguinary actions were fought in the Peninsula, in none had the struggle been more arduous than in these battles of the Pyrenees, and never was the military ability of the Duke of Wellington more severely tried than on this occasion. In these encounters Soult lost upwards of 8,000 men, and would have lost his artillery, but that, finding he could not use his guns; he sent them back to France. The losses of the Allies hardly fell short of 6,000 men *hors de combat*. Lord Wellington's official account of these battles was brought to England by the Prince of Orange, one of his aides-de-camp, and was received with the greatest enthusiasm. The arrival of Lord Wellington's baton of Field Marshal found the advanced guards of the British army planted on "the sacred soil of France."

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CHAPTER XIX

THE siege of Sebastian, which had been necessarily suspended during these operations, was now resumed. The guns which had been removed were re-landed; and as the trenches had been occupied by a small blockading force, the labour of again breaking ground was rendered unnecessary. It was decided to renew the former attack with an increased number of guns; to establish new batteries on the isthmus, and to continue the breach round the angle of the land front.

On the 19th of August the arrival of the fleet of transports from England with the requisite battering-train, ordnance stores, &c., enabled Lord Wellington to resume his operations against San Sebastian; and with such activity were they prosecuted, that at 9 A.M. of the 26th the batteries again opened on the fortress.

On the night of the 27th the garrison made a sortie, which proved unsuccessful. "Profiting by past experience, such precautions had been taken of forming good banquettes to the parallel, posting sentinels, &c., and the guard were kept so prepared to stand to their arms, that the assailants were immediately repulsed with the bayonet, without effecting the slightest mischief; notwithstanding that, favoured by the obscurity of the night, and the vicinity of the place, they had reached the crest of the parapet before a musket could be fired. The activity of the garrison continued unabated, and it was apprehended that they might attempt, under cover of darkness, to cross the Urumea, and spike the guns in the Chofre batteries. In order, therefore, to guard against such a misfortune, the artillery officers took measures for their security by fastening an iron plate over the vents, locked on by a chain, which would have occasioned some delay in spiking them, even if attempted by experienced artillerymen. They also resorted to similar measures for the safety of the breaching batteries on the right, which, being almost unsupported by a parallel, and having only a small guard for their protection, were much exposed to danger should the garrison show any enterprise; for, the Urumea being

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perfectly fordable at low water, to cross and spike the guns, and return back into the place, would only have been the work of a few minutes."

No attempt of the kind was made; and from the powerful fire of the British batteries, the defences were sufficiently ruined to warrant an assault. To ascertain the nature and extent of the fire which the enemy could turn on the columns when advancing, and, if possible, induce them to spring their mines, the engineers recommended a false attack, which was accordingly made on the night of the 29th by Lieutenant Macadam, of the 9th regiment. "The order was sudden, no volunteers were demanded, no rewards offered, no means of excitement resorted to; yet such is the inherent bravery of British soldiers, that seventeen men of the Royals, the nearest at hand, immediately leaped forth ready and willing to encounter what seemed certain death. With a rapid pace, all the breaching batteries playing hotly at the time, they reached the foot of the breach unperceived, and then mounted in extended order, shouting and firing; but the French were too steady to be imposed upon, and their musketry laid the whole party low, with the exception of their commander, who returned alone to the trenches."¹ On the 30th the sea-flank, for five hundred feet, was laid open, and the fire of the Chofre batteries was turned against the defences of Monte Orgullo. The half-bastion of St. John, and the high curtain above it, were now in ruins, and the palisades on the face of the hornwork beaten down. Lord Wellington, satisfied with the appearance of the breaches, gave orders for their being assaulted next morning; the debouches for the troops were prepared, and as the tide would have ebbed sufficiently by eleven o'clock, that hour was named for the storm.

The garrison expected the assault, and was prepared to receive it. The appearance of the sea-front was deceptive; behind it was a sheer descent of twenty feet, and among the burned houses in its rear, a wall fifteen feet high, and loop-holed for musketry, with traverses at each extremity, completely isolated the whole extent of the breaches. The tower

¹ Napier.

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of Los Hornos, standing in the centre of the greater breach, was mined and charged with twelve hundred-weight of powder; and at the salient angle of the covered-way, close to which the column of attack must pass, two countermines were formed and charged for an explosion. Several guns flanked the breaches; and the Mirador battery commanded the whole space over which the assailants must move to the attack. The column of attack was formed of the 2nd brigade of the 5th division, commanded by Major-General Robinson, with an immediate support of detachments of volunteers, and having in reserve the remainder of the 5th division, consisting of Major-General Spry's Portuguese brigade, and 1st brigade under Major-General Hay; as also the 5th battalion of Cacadores of General Bradford's brigade, under Major Hill; the whole under the direction of Lieutenant-General Sir James Leith, commanding the 5th division.

The morning was wet and gloomy, the devoted city was shrouded in mist, and for want of light, the thunder of the British batteries was silent. About eight o'clock the fog cleared away—the roar of artillery was heard—and it was continued with unabated violence until the signal was given for the assault, and the storming-parties rushed forward to the breaches.

“The column, in filing out of the right of the trenches was, as before, exposed to a heavy fire of shells and grape-shot, and a mine was exploded in the left angle of the counterscarp of the hornwork, which did great damage, but did not check the ardour of the troops in advancing to the attack. There never was anything so fallacious as the external appearance of the breach; without some description, its almost insuperable difficulties cannot be estimated. Notwithstanding its great extent, there was but one point where it was possible to enter, and there by single files. All the inside of the wall to the right of the curtain formed a perpendicular scarp of at least twenty feet to the level of the streets; so that the narrow ridge of the curtain itself, formed by the breaching of its end and front, was the only accessible point. During the suspension of the operations of the siege, from want of ammunition, the enemy had prepared every means of defence

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which art could devise, so that great numbers of men were covered by intrenchments and traverses, in the hornwork, on the ramparts of the curtain, and inside of the town opposite to the breach, and ready to pour a most destructive fire of musketry on both flanks of the approach to the top of the narrow ridge of the curtain. Everything that the most determined bravery could attempt was repeatedly tried in vain by the troops, who were brought forward from the trenches in succession. No man outlived the attempt to gain the ridge; and though the slope of the breach afforded shelter from the enemy's musketry, yet still the nature of the stone rubbish prevented the great exertions of the engineers and working-parties from being able to form a lodgment for the troops, exposed to the shells and grape from the batteries of the castle.

"In this almost desperate state of the attack," says Sir Thomas Graham, "after consulting with Colonel Dickson, commanding the Royal Artillery, I ventured to order the guns to be turned against the curtain. A heavy fire of artillery was directed against it; passing a few feet only over the heads of our troops on the breach, and was kept up with a precision of practice beyond all example. Meanwhile, I accepted the offer of a part of Major-General Bradford's Portuguese brigade to ford the river near its mouth. The advance of the 1st battalion, 13th regiment, under Major Snodgrass, over the open beach, and across the river; and of a detachment of the 24th regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel M'Bean, in support, was made in the handsomest style, under a very severe fire of grape. Major Snodgrass attacked, and finally carried the small breach on the right of the great one, and Lieutenant-Colonel M'Bean's detachment occupied the right of the great breach. I ought not to omit to mention, that a similar offer was made by the 1st Portuguese regiment of Brigadier-General Wilson's brigade, under Lieutenant-Colonel Fearon; and that both Major-General Bradford and Brigadier-General Wilson had, from the beginning, urged most anxiously the employment of their respective brigades in the attack, as they had had so large a share in the labour and fatigues of the former attack. Observing now the effect of the admirable fire of the batteries against

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the curtain, though the enemy was so much covered, a great effort was ordered to be made to gain the high ridge at all hazards, at the same time that an attempt should be made to storm the hornwork.

"It fell to the lot of the 2nd brigade of the 5th division, under the command of Colonel the Hon. Charles Greville, to move out of the trenches for this purpose; and the 3rd battalion of the Royal Scots, under Lieutenant-Colonel Barnes, supported by the 38th, under Lieutenant-Colonel Miles, fortunately arrived to assault the breach of the curtain about the time when an explosion on the rampart of the curtain (occasioned by the fire of the artillery) created some confusion among the enemy. The narrow pass was gained, and was maintained. after a severe conflict; and the troops on the right of the breach, having about this time succeeded in forcing the barricades on the top of the narrow line wall, found their way into the houses that joined it. Thus, after an assault which lasted about two hours, under the most trying circumstances, a firm footing was obtained.

"It was impossible to restrain the impetuosity of the troops; and in an hour more the enemy were driven from all the complication of defences prepared in the streets, suffering a severe loss in their retreat to the castle, and leaving the whole town in our possession."

It is hardly possible to describe the difficulties that presented themselves to the assailants; for even after the breaches, and the walls and traverses behind them, were carried, the most formidable obstacles were still to be overcome. The principal square and every street presented a succession of retrenchments; but the garrison, dispirited at their previous loss, and being instantaneously attacked in every direction with vigour and determination, were scarcely able to make a momentary stand on any point; and 700 having been made prisoners, the remainder took refuge in the castle and the convent of St. Teresa.

The new and daring application of the besiegers' artillery, by which, when all other chances were desperate, the fortress was reduced, is the most striking event attendant on the storm of San Sebastian. The fire of forty-seven heavy guns and howitzers passed over the heads of the

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assailants, and yet the practice was so beautiful that scarcely a casualty occurred. The effects of the cannonade were terrible. "On inspecting the defences, it was found that the tremendous enfilade fire on the high curtain, though only maintained for twenty minutes, had dismounted every gun but two. Many of these pieces had their muzzles shot away, and the artillerymen lay mutilated at their stations. Further, the stone parapets were much damaged, the cheeks of the embrasures knocked off, and the terre-plein cut up and thickly strewn with headless bodies. In short, the whole land front had, from the effects of the cannonade, been rendered a scene of destruction, desolation, and ruin."

CHAPTER XX

THE battles of the Nive equalled those of the Pyrenees in obstinacy and duration. In the latter the French marshal was the assailant; in the former he was the assailed; and though both in his attack and defence he fought under the most favourable circumstances, in both he was signally defeated. In the Pyrenees the passes were widely separated; the lateral communications indirect; the position extensive, and consequently vulnerable in many points. The shorter lines of Soult's position enabled him to mass troops together with rapidity, and the undulating surface effectually concealed his movements. Hence his attacks were made with overwhelming numbers, and although expected, they could not be distinctly ascertained until the heads of his columns were in immediate contact with the pickets. At Bayonne the situations of Wellington and Soult were exactly reversed. The Allied general was obliged to operate on both sides of a dangerous river, with bad roads and long and inconvenient lines; while, at the same time, he had to secure St. Jean de Luz from any attempts that Soult might make to gain a post of such importance. The French marshal had the advantage of a fortified camp, a fortress immediately beside him, with a permanent bridge across the

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Nive, by which he could concentrate on either bank of the river. Among the generals who earned extraordinary renown in these encounters, were Sir Rowland Hill and Sir John Hope.

It was a part of Lord Wellington's general plan that Bayonne should be invested on the 23rd, according to the arrangements which he had made with Sir John Hope and Admiral Penrose. He had selected the citadel for his point of attack, and determined to force the passage of the Adour, and about two miles and a half below the town to fix a bridge upon the river. At this point the Adour is 300 yards broad, and a bend in its course conceals it in part from the view of the garrison of Bayonne. The current is rapid, and there is often a heavy swell, so that for pontoons or open boats it became necessary to substitute decked vessels of from thirty to fifty tons. Of such vessels, called *chasse-marées*, there were very many in the ports of St. Jean de Luz, Passages, and Locoa. These were collected at Locoa; and a good bridge with a flexible boom was also prepared. On the 22nd of February the flotilla put to sea, protected by Admiral Penrose, with the *Porcupine* frigate, *Syren* brig, and five gunboats.

On the 23rd Sir John Hope marched from his cantonments to direct the passage of the river. Field-guns were moved forward to protect the launch of the boats. At the sight of the troops the enemy's picket retired upon the citadel. Fifty men were rowed to the right bank, and a hawser having been stretched across the river, the five pontoons were formed into rafts, and a detachment of the Guards was ferried over. At this time only six companies of Guards, two of the 60th Rifles, and a small party of the rocket corps, had arrived on the right bank. About five o'clock a detachment from the garrison of the citadel, 1500 in number, attacked the Allied troops, but were soon driven back. The flotilla appeared off the Adour on the morning of the 25th, and, with the exception of three or four of the *chasse-marées*, reached the land in safety.

The bridge having been now completed, and fresh troops and artillery having passed the river, the citadel of Bayonne was closely invested. The garrison were labouring at an advanced line of defence, but were at once driven

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in. The position occupied by Soult at Sauveterre was covered by a broad river. Numbers, position, everything was in his favour, and yet was he compelled to retire at every point.

The fortress of Bayonne is about four miles from the sea, at the confluence of the Nive and the Adour. The town stands astride the former river, but altogether on the left bank of the latter; a citadel, however, occupies the crest of a commanding hill on the northern bank of the Adour, covering the approach on that side. The Adour is nowhere fordable below its junction with the Bidouze. The Nive is also a broad, rapid river; and all the bridges, save those of Bayonne, had been destroyed. An intrenched camp had been established in advance of the walls, capable of protecting a large army. Within these lines lay Marshal Soult, with an army, reduced, it is true, but still amounting to 50,000 men. An attack on such a body, so sheltered, held out but slender promise of success. It became necessary, therefore, to tempt Soult to abandon so advantageous a position. Hazardous as was the undertaking, Lord Wellington perceived that no further advance into France could be hoped for until Soult had been dislodged from Bayonne, and only awaited a change in the weather to make the attempt. On the 9th of December the Allied army passed the Nive, forcing back the enemy into their intrenched camp; and Sir Rowland Hill, bringing forward his right and placing it on the Adour, shut the enemy in between that river and the Nive. Hope and Allen, having reconnoitred the intrenched camp, drove in the pickets, and with the infantry of the 5th division penetrated to the margin of the Adour below Bayonne. Soult now saw that the time had arrived for resuming the offensive; and before dawn on the 10th, 35,000 men were on their march to overwhelm the troops left to protect the great road to San Sebastian.

Had Sir Rowland Hill been still a nameless soldier, the battle of the 13th would have established him at once as an officer of high pretensions. On the heights of St. Pierre, he found himself, with 13,600 men, and 14 pieces of artillery; in his front assailed by seven infantry divisions, mustering 35,000 bayonets; in his rear, threatened by

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the corps of General Paris and the cavalry under Pierre Soult. Never did a general abide a battle against greater odds, and achieve a bolder victory !

The thickness of the morning favoured Soult's order of attack, and his dispositions were, consequently, unobserved. Three infantry divisions, the cavalry of Sparre, and 20 pieces of artillery marched against Hill's position; Foy's and Maransin's corps succeeded as a support; and a powerful reserve was in the rear. "The mist hung heavily; and the French masses, at one moment quite shrouded in vapour, at another dimly seen, or looming sudden and large and dark at different points, appeared like thunder-clouds gathering before the storm. At half-past eight Soult pushed back the British pickets in the centre; the sun burst out at that moment, the sparkling fire of the light troops spread wide in the valley, and crept up the hills on either flank, while the bellowing of 40 pieces of artillery shook the banks of the Nive and the Adour. Daricau, marching on the French right, was directed against General Pringle. D'Armanac, moving on their left, and taking Old Moguerre as the point of direction, was ordered to force Byng's right. Abbé assailed the centre at St. Pierre, where General Stewart commanded; for Sir Rowland Hill had taken his station on a commanding mount in the rear, whence he could see the whole battle and direct the movements."

Ashworth's Portuguese brigade bore the brunt of the opening attack; and although the 71st, with two guns, and afterwards the 50th, were sent to their support, the whole were driven back, and the rest of the position won. Under the brow of the height the 92nd were formed. Instantly General Barnes led them forward, scattered the light troops who would have checked him, and charged and repulsed the column. But the French guns opened—their horse-artillery commenced a close fire—a second column came forward with imposing steadiness—and the 92nd fell back, and re-formed behind the high ground. Happily, a thick hedge covered the front of the Portuguese, and the wood upon the right was occupied by some companies of their Caçadores with a wing of the 50th, who held it against every effort of the enemy. The French had already put

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their grand column in march; and, when the occurrence might have been fatal, two British colonels compromised the safety of their posts, and withdrew their regiments out of fire! Hill observed that Foy's and Maransin's divisions, after clearing the deep roads which had impeded them, were about to come to the assistance of Abbé, and therefore the battle must be won or lost upon a cast. He quitted the height where he had been posted; halted the Buffs—sent them again into action—and led back the 71st himself. Promptly employing his reserve, he directed one brigade of Le Cor against D'Armanac, and led the other in person against Abbé. In the meantime, the wood was bravely held, and the 92nd again formed behind the village of St. Pierre, and again came on to dare a combat with a column in numbers five times its superior. But, strange to say, the challenge was declined. A mounted officer who headed the enemy waved his sword, and turned the French about; there was no pursuit; and the column retired across the valley, and resumed the position from which it had originally advanced.

It was noon—the assault upon the Allied position had failed on every point—Pringle had driven back Soult's right wing—Buchan had repulsed the left; but still there were enough troops disposable to have enabled Soult to have massed them in a column, sufficiently strong to force the Allied centre. Hill, consequently, reinforced it with the 57th—the 6th division, which had been despatched by Lord Wellington to his assistance, now topped the height behind—the 4th division, with Lord Wellington in person, presently appeared—part of the 3rd division succeeded it, and the 7th were coming on in rapid march. But the crisis of the day had passed; and the fresh divisions arrived upon the ground only to witness the glory of their brave companions. Buchan was driving D'Armanac's division from the ridge which it had previously carried—Byng clearing another rising ground of the enemy—the high road was vigorously attacked by the centre—and the French were everywhere defeated, and two pieces of artillery captured. Immediately, Lord Wellington, after congratulating Sir Rowland upon his success, ordered a general advance; and until night closed the retiring

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columns were vigorously pursued and sustained a heavy loss. Darkness, and very difficult ground, lessened the casualties, which must have been otherwise enormous; and Soult, after taking Foy's division across the Adour, sent two to Marsac, and left Count Drouot in front of Mousserolles.

The action of St. Pierre lasted but a few hours; and on a space not exceeding a square mile five thousand men were lying, killed and wounded. When Lord Wellington rode up, one rapid glance across the battle-field told how furiously the attack had been made, and with what stern bravery it had been repelled on every point; and seizing his lieutenant's hand, he exclaimed, while his eyes sparkled with delight: "My dear Hill, the day's your own!" Never was a compliment more happily paid to skill and courage.

Having left Bayonne closely invested, and made so strong a demonstration upon the front of Soult's line as to engage almost entirely his attention, Sir Rowland Hill crossed the Gave d'Oleron at Villenave and turned his left, a movement which induced the French Commander-in-Chief to transfer his head-quarters to Orthez. Other divisions of the English army having followed Hill, Lord Wellington determined to attack the new position of Soult at Orthez.

At this place Soult had collected all his disposable forces, with the determination to make a firm stand. His position was exceedingly strong. His left, commanded by Clausel, occupied Orthez, which is situated on the side of an eminence overlooking the Gave. His centre, under D'Erlon, was thrown back along the crest of a range of heights overlooking the road to Dax; whilst his right, commanded by Reille, was posted on a hill towards the village of St. Boes. A reserve, composed of the divisions of Harispe and Villatte, occupied an elevated plateau astride the roads to St. Pau and St. Sever. It was scarcely possible to conceive a more advantageous position than that occupied by the enemy.

The left wing of the Allies commenced the battle seriously about nine o'clock on the 27th of February, although from daylight a partial fusillade had been kept

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up between the light troops, occasionally varied by the deeper booming of artillery. While the 3d and 6th divisions carried the lower grounds against which they had been directed, the 4th had won the village of St. Does, and endeavoured by desperate fighting to gain a footing on the open ground behind it.

"Five times, breaking through the scattered houses, did Ross carry his battle into the wider space beyond; yet, ever as his troops issued forth, the French guns from the open hill smote them in front, and the reserved battery on the Dax road swept through them with grape from flank to flank. And then Taupin's supporting masses rushed forward with a wasting fire, and lapping the flanks with skirmishers, which poured along the ravines on either hand, forced the shattered columns back into the village. It was in vain that, with desperate valour, the Allies, time after time, broke through the narrow way, and struggled to spread a front beyond. Ross fell dangerously wounded; and Taupin, whose troops were clustered thickly, and well supported, defied their utmost efforts. Nor was Soult less happy on the other side. The nature of the ground would not permit the 3rd and 6th divisions to engage many men at once, so that no progress was made; and one small detachment which Picton extended to his left, having made an attempt to gain the smaller tongue jutting out from the centre hill, was suddenly charged, as it neared the summit, by Foy, and driven down again in confusion, losing several hundred prisoners."

Finding that the left attack had not succeeded, Lord Wellington detached a Caçadore battalion to clear Ross's right flank from the skirmishers that had annoyed it. But the Portuguese brigade was already broken and driven back, and the village cleared of the British troops, and again occupied by the enemy. On every side the attack had failed; for beyond a given point the assailants had never been able to advance—and now, disordered and repulsed, nothing appeared wanting but for the French marshal to push forward his reserves, and seize a decisive victory.

But the lion was in his path. Wellington had galloped forward to direct the movements of his left wing person-

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ally; and now, in the thickest of the fire, he suddenly changed the plan of attack; and with that rapidity of conception, which with him had turned the fortunes of so many fields, he instantly changed his dispositions. Directing Walker's division (the 7th) and Barnard's light brigade against the left of the height, where the French right united with the centre, he supported their attack by an advance of the 3rd and 6th divisions, which had previously remained unengaged, until Beresford's operations should be demonstrated. In a moment, "the face of the battle was changed." The furious assault of the light brigade bore down resistance, and gained the crest of the hill. The 52nd pressed tight against a French battalion which connected the divisions of Foy and D'Armanac, and at the same time Picton and Clinton were moving on their flank. On both sides the musketry was close and destructive. Two generals, Buchand and Foy, were carried from the field; and troops, so lately confident of victory, as suddenly became shaken and discouraged. Indeed, the storm had so strangely burst from an unexpected quarter—for the march of the 52nd had been hardly perceived save by the skirmishers—that the enemy "got into confusion, and the disorder spreading to Reille's wing, he also was forced to fall back and take a new position to restore his line of battle. The narrow pass behind St. Boes was thus opened, and Wellington, seizing the critical moment, thrust the 4th and 7th divisions, Vivian's cavalry, and two batteries of artillery through, and spread a front beyond."

Instantly D'Armanac's position was crowned by a British battery, whose fire swept through the columns exposed to their cannonade, and rent these heavy masses into pieces. In vain the French cavalry charged the English guns. The fire of the 42nd repulsed them—the 3rd division fought with its customary determination—Inglis's brigade charged with the bayonet; and Soult, seeing the ground was not to be recovered, commenced an orderly retreat, although but a brief space before his movements had indicated the advance that leads to victory.

How rapidly the fortunes of a battle alter! Immediately after he had changed his dispositions for attack,

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Lord Wellington ordered Hill's corps to force the bridge of Orthez,—an order that was promptly executed. Comprehending in a moment how matters went, Hill, when he crossed the Gave, pushed rapidly forward by a parallel ridge to that by which Soult must retire his beaten army to Sault de Navailles. The French retreat had already commenced, and nothing could be more soldierly than the steadiness with which it was conducted, as the whole *corps d'armée* fell back by échelons of divisions, each covering the movements of the other, and holding by turns the different positions which the ground they crossed presented. "In this manner the French yielded, step by step, and without confusion, the Allies advancing with an incessant deafening musketry and cannonade, yet losing many men, especially on the right, where the 3rd division was very strongly opposed. However, as the danger of being cut off at Salespice by Hill became more imminent, the retrograde movements were more hurried and confused: Hill seeing this, quickened his pace, until at last both sides began to run violently, and so many men broke from the French ranks, making across the fields towards the fords, and such a rush was necessarily made by the rest to gain the bridge of Sault de Navailles, that the whole country was covered with scattered bands. Sir Stapleton Cotton then breaking through, with Lord Edward Somerset's hussars, a small covering body opposed to him by Harispe, sabred 200 or 300 men; and the 7th Hussars cut off about 2000, who threw down their arms in an enclosed field; yet, some confusion or mismanagement occurring the greatest part, recovering their weapons, escaped, and the pursuit ceased at the Luy of Bearn."

Never did a beaten army escape the worst consequences of a *deroute* more narrowly. Had the British cavalry been enabled to get forward with more celerity, a large portion of the French infantry must have been unavoidably cut off. To another circumstance, also, the comparatively low amount of the French casualties may be attributed. A defeat, complete as that of Orthez, would have most probably entailed upon the vanquished army a terrible disaster, had not Lord Wellington been prevented from following up his success, and pressing his advantages by

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personal direction. At the very moment when the confusion in the enemy's ranks was increasing, a spent shot struck the pommel of his sword, and caused a painful contusion. Lord Wellington with difficulty kept his saddle, and an intersected country, which otherwise he would have crossed at speed, was therefore slowly traversed. Had he been allowed to urge it on, the pursuit would have been ardently and successfully continued; but it ceased at Sault de Navailles, and night closed upon the victors and the vanquished.

In recurring to the operations of the main armies of the contending parties in the South, it becomes necessary to remind the reader, that on retreating from St. Sever, the French army had, in the first instance, taken the road to Agen (a town on the right hand of the Garonne, between Bordeaux and Toulouse), as if undecided whether to abandon the former city, or to give up the support afforded by the Pyrenees, and the chance of effecting a junction with Suchet. The delay in the progress of the Allied troops, occasioned by the necessary operation of destroying the bridges in their rear, afforded Soult the opportunity, and probably suggested the idea, of throwing his army once more upon the intersected country at the foot of the Pyrenees; deeming that he might more readily save Bordeaux by such a course, than by a direct movement to cover that city, or the half-measure he seems to have first resolved on, of retiring upon Agen. It was but a choice of evils. Doubling back his march, therefore, to the south, and hastening it to avoid being cut off by Hill's corps at Aire, he withdrew from Lord Wellington's front along the right bank of the Adour, expecting thereby to prevent him from detaching a corps to Bordeaux. In this expectation it will have been seen that he was disappointed. The Allies followed him closely from position to position, and on the 19th he had collected his whole army on the right bank of the Adour, his left resting on Tarbes and his right extending in the direction of Rabastens. On the 20th Lord Wellington directed Sir Rowland Hill and the 3rd division to advance again upon his front, whilst Sir Harry Clinton, with the 6th division, supported by two brigades, should cross the Adour near Vic, and turn his

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right, a feat which was satisfactorily accomplished. The enemy were driven back at all points, and in the night retired to St. Gaudens, on Toulouse, which they entered on the 24th.

The Allies, impeded by the state of the weather and encumbered by a pontoon-train, did not arrive before Toulouse until the 27th. Here Soult had collected every disposable soldier, and occupied a position, the local advantages of which he had carefully improved by fortifying the approaches with skill, and constructing upon it redoubts of considerable strength. On the 28th, Lord Wellington proceeded to lay down his pontoon-bridge; but the water's surface, increased by the recent floods, was found too extensive to be covered by the pontoons. This failure elicited from a staff-officer the remark, that until the river fell a passage would not be effected. Lord Wellington replied immediately, in a tone of strong decision:—"If it will not do one way, we must try another, for I never in my life gave up anything I once undertook."

On the 31st the pontoons were laid down, and Hill crossed the Garonne; but from the state of the roads it was found impossible to reach Toulouse in that direction; and consequently the right wing countermarched and recrossed to the left bank of the river. A better situation was found for laying the bridge, and on the 4th of April it was removed, and thrown across a bend of the Garonne, half a league above Grenade. Beresford crossed immediately, with the 4th and 6th divisions and a cavalry brigade; but a sudden rising of the river prevented the light divisions and Freire's Spaniards from following, for the pontoons were obliged to be taken up, to prevent their being swept away by the flood, and, consequently, Beresford's position was isolated, and open to an overwhelming attack. Soult, however, did not avail himself of the advantage that accident had placed in his way; and on the 8th the flood had sufficiently abated to allow the bridge to be replaced, and Freire crossed and joined Beresford. On the 9th the pontoons were carried up the stream to Ausonne, and on the 10th the 3rd and light divisions passed the river at daylight, and Lord Wellington formed his division for the attack.

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The town of Toulouse is surrounded on three sides by the canal of Languedoc and the Garonne. On the left of that river, the suburb, which the enemy had fortified with strong field-works in front of the old wall, formed a good *tête-de-pont*. They had likewise a *tête-de-pont* at each bridge of the canal, which was besides defended by the fire, in some places of musketry, and in all of artillery, from the wall of the town. Beyond the canal to the eastward, and between that and the river Ers is a height which extends as far as Montaudran, and over which pass all the approaches to the canal and town from the eastward, which it defended. In addition to the *têtes-de-pont*, the enemy had fortified this height with five redoubts, connected by lines of entrenchment, and had with extraordinary diligence made every preparation for defence. They had destroyed all the bridges over the Ers, by which the right of their position could be approached. The roads from Arrière to Toulouse being impracticable, no alternative presented itself but to attack the enemy in this formidable position.

No sooner did Lord Wellington arrive on the right bank of the Garonne than he directed a general movement of the army towards the Ers, when the 18th Hussars, led by Colonel Vivian, made a most gallant attack on a superior body of the enemy's cavalry, commanded by Pierre Soult, and drove it across the river, with the loss of 100 prisoners. The passage of the Ers was thus secured, and his lordship's meditated operations against Mount Calvignet importantly facilitated. The necessity for removing the pontoon-bridge higher up the Garonne, however, compelled Lord Wellington to postpone his attack on the enemy until the 10th, on the morning of which day the light division also crossed to the right bank, leaving only the 2nd British and General Le Cor's Portuguese divisions, and a brigade of cavalry under Sir Rowland Hill, in front of the enemy's works, covering the faubourg of St. Cyprien. The heights on the left of the enemy's position, called La Pujade, were guarded by two divisions of infantry, having in their front a brigade of horse. Those of Mount Calvignet on the right centre were occupied by one division of infantry, and those of

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Montaudran on the extreme right were held by one brigade of infantry, with a strong body of cavalry in their front, on the road to Bordes. Heavy columns of reserve were posted on the rear of the heights. The canal, from the rear of the La Pujade to its junction with the Garonne, was guarded by strong bodies of infantry. The suburbs of St. Cyprien were occupied by a division; that of St. Etienne, on the eastern side, by another; and various posts in the faubourgs, and on the walls, were defended by reserve conscripts, and national guards.

Marshal Beresford opened the battle by crossing the bridge of Orade, and carrying the village of Montblanc. He then marched up the left bank of the Ers in three open columns, in the most perfect order. When he had arrived at the extreme right of the enemy's position, he formed his lines of attack, and advanced steadily upon it. Meanwhile, General Freire led the Spanish foot in front of Croix d'Orade in two lines of attack. A battery of Portuguese artillery, on a neighbouring height, covered their movements, General Ponsonby's brigade of cavalry forming their reserve. The right and left of the heights, occupied by the enemy, were now assaulted at the same moment. The Spaniards drove in the first brigade of the French they encountered, but were somewhat disordered by the deadly fire of grape that was opened upon them. The second line of the Spaniards did not advance with much alacrity, and the French, seeing their hesitation, rushed upon them with such vigour, that, with the exception of a single regiment, the Spanish force broke, and was driven back on the Ers with heavy loss. General Freire exerted himself most nobly to rally the fugitives, but with indifferent success. Lord Wellington, who seemed on such occasions to be ubiquitous, rallied a small body of them himself, at an important point. The light division saved the Spaniards from being pursued, and the bridge over the Ers was preserved. The right of the enemy's position was already in the hands of Marshal Beresford; whilst General Clinton's division, having advanced up the steep height of Mount Calvinet, had carried the redoubt which covered the right flank of the hill, and established themselves most gallantly in the enemy's line. General

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Coles' division, in like order, but with smaller loss, marched up the heights on the enemy's extreme right, formed upon the summit, and held their ground in spite of the brigade of infantry in their front. At this moment, 10,000 of the Allies were drawn up on the range of heights opposite the enemy; and Marshal Beresford only awaited the arrival of his artillery to follow up his success. The enemy still occupied, in great strength, a formidable line of entrenchments, two fortified houses, and four large redoubts. In the absence of the only means of dislodging them, therefore, all further attacks on the enemy were of necessity suspended.

Meanwhile, Soult was not idle. He reinforced strongly his cavalry on the heights of Montaudran, and brought from the faubourg of St. Cyprien and the canal as many troops as could be spared, to form reserves in the rear of Calvinet. By the repulse of the Spaniards, the French had obtained a great advantage, and a check given to Picton's division before the *tête-de-pont* of the Pont Jumeaux afforded them a new ovation. Sir Rowland Hill, on the left bank of the Garonne, was more fortunate. He had driven the enemy from the first line of works covering the faubourg St. Cyprien; but the second line, formed by the ancient wall of the city, could not be carried by a *coup-de-main*; and this limitation of their line of defence enabled Count Reille to send one of his divisions to the assistance of Marshal Soult. The cause of Picton's check had been excess of zeal, and a deviation from his instructions. He had been directed to make a false attack on the canal bridge nearest to the Garonne, but had in fact committed his division in a real attack on a formidable work which defended that bridge, and which, by the nature of its wide ditch, was found unassailable. When he discovered his error he withdrew, but not without very serious loss. Lord Beresford got his guns up about noon, and continued his movements along the ridge at the head of two divisions—the 6th, under Sir Henry Clinton, led; the 4th, under Sir Lowry Cole, followed; and both advanced upon the enemy's redoubts in line. Soult met them with all his strength, advancing, indeed, where the fire from their redoubts could render them no help.

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The struggle was now terrific, but the British bayonet prevailed. General Taupin, who commanded one of the French divisions, was killed, and his men driven back in confusion on their works. The two principal redoubts, and the fortified houses, were next carried by a brigade of the 6th division under General Pack. This tremendous struggle took place within sight of the inhabitants of the town, many of whom were looking on. The French made desperate efforts to recover their redoubts, but in vain. Soult endeavoured to re-establish the battle, but was repulsed with great loss, and the 6th division now took the works of La Pujade without a struggle. By 5 P.M. the whole of the works of Mount Calvinet were in the hands of the British, and the whole city at the entire mercy of their artillery. Soult occupied the rising ground in the faubourg St. Etienne until dusk, when he, too, retired behind the canal. The loss of the Allied army was very severe; 595 killed and 4046 wounded, of whom 2124 were British, 1928 Spaniards, and 607 Portuguese. Very few prisoners were made, and only one gun captured. But the formidable works left in the victor's hands were more important trophies than a whole park of artillery would have been. By the capture of the heights of Calvinet, the Allied troops had closed Toulouse on three sides; the narrow space between the Garonne and the Canal of Languedoc alone remaining open to the enemy; and the road to Carcassone, which leaves Toulouse on that side, affording their only means of escape. Lord Wellington sent the light cavalry to cut off the communication, but this was not accomplished. Soult had expressed his determination to "bury himself and army under the ruins of Toulouse rather than suffer himself to be driven away." But he did nothing of the sort. On the 11th he hurried to Carcassone, leaving behind him three general officers and 1600 wounded men.

Lord Wellington was received in Toulouse with loud acclamations. The white flag was hoisted, and the inhabitants hailed him as their liberator and friend.

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CHAPTER XXI

ON the 10th of June the Duke rejoined the army at Bordeaux, and peace having been signed by the Allied powers, nothing remained but to break up the armies, and dispatch the troops under orders for service in America, to their destination, with the least possible delay. On the 14th, accordingly, he took leave of his army in a general order, in which he thanked them for their good conduct, discipline, and gallantry, in his own name and in that of the country at large. On the 23rd he reached Dover, in His Majesty's ship *Rosario*, where he was greeted with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of applause, and conveyed to his hotel upon the shoulders of the people.

By a liberal arrangement of the Allied Sovereigns, Napoleon had assigned to him, as his future kingdom and place of retreat, the small island of Elba, which was secured to him as an independent sovereignty; and he was accompanied thither by a few of his most intimate friends and devotees. Everything which the most sanguine expectations could have anticipated had been achieved. The standards of Northern Europe were planted in the squares of Paris. The British flag was waving in the market-places of Bordeaux and Toulouse; and the banners of Portugal and Spain were floating over the plains of Southern France.

The offer of the island of Elba to Napoleon (said to have been the sole act of the Emperor of Russia) was an ill-judged and short-sighted arrangement. It was too near the scenes of his former triumphs and associates not to suggest to his restless and dissatisfied mind the idea of resuming his old position. The Imperial rank, which was still continued to him, and his position at Elba, kept him in constant view of these perturbed spirits, and allowed him a constant intercourse with his partisans. A military country, like France, differs essentially from our own. In one the sword is readily turned into a ploughshare, for most of the soldiery have in earlier life been engaged in manufacturing or agricultural pursuits. In the other

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are thousands whose trade is war,—and war conducted upon principles which unfits the soldier, in peaceful times, from adopting any honest alternative. By the sudden reduction of the war-establishment of France, in 1814, this dangerous portion of the community was flung loose upon the country, and the result was inevitable.

Such was the feverish condition of France at the opening of the year 1815, that in February the Duke of Wellington left Paris for Vienna, to replace Lord Castlereagh, whose presence was so imperatively called for in the British Parliament, that although Congress was still sitting, he was compelled to absent himself from its deliberations, and nominate a successor. Months passed: the reconciliation of the different and often conflicting interests of the several European powers demanding the gravest and most elaborate consideration. The attitude of the continent, meanwhile, was that of an armed peace; each state, that of France excepted, maintaining a war-establishment, and seeming rather to be preparing for future destruction than seeking to repose from the battles of a quarter of a century. This delay in resuming a pacific position was most fortunate; for the world was soon afterwards electrified by the news that Napoleon had escaped from Elba.

The ex-Emperor quitted Elba with all his court and military officers, and 1200 troops, on the 26th of February, and landed at Cannes on the 1st of March. This event was communicated by the Duke of Wellington, to whom it had been announced in a despatch of Lord Burghersh, to the Emperors of Austria, Russia, and the King of Prussia; and they were unanimous in the expression of their determination to unite their efforts to support the system established by the Peace of Paris. In this spirit, they forthwith placed their respective forces at the disposal of the King of France.

On the 13th of March a declaration was signed and promulgated by the Austrian, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian, Prussian, and Swedish Plenipotentiaries, denouncing Napoleon Buonaparte as an enemy and disturber of the tranquillity of the world; and intimating the determination of those Powers to maintain entire the

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Treaty of Paris, to employ all their means, and unite all their efforts for this object.

Meanwhile, Napoleon prosecuted his march to Grenoble, but without that display of enthusiasm which he had anticipated, in his progress. As he approached that city, however, the aspect of his affairs underwent a most favourable change, occasioned by the unanimous defection of Labedoyere's regiment from the royal cause. Marshal Ney, too, who had volunteered to seize the usurper, and carry him in a cage to Paris, no sooner came within sight of his old master, than he declared in his favour. On the 20th of March, Napoleon entered Paris at the moment that Louis XVIII. was quitting the city on the other side for Lille. Undismayed by the knowledge of the determination of the Allies, Napoleon began to organize his army; and, by the most untiring diligence, aided by the services of most of his old generals, he succeeded in collecting a formidable force; greatly augmented by the vast numbers of prisoners of war who had returned to France from all parts of Europe! In the first instance, he announced himself as the lieutenant of his son; but at Lyons he addressed the people in his own name, heading a manifesto "By the grace of God," by which he pronounced everything null and void which had been done since his abdication; abolishing all orders and appointments, and convoking a general meeting of the authorities, to re-establish a constitution, giving to this extraordinary assembly the title of *Champ de Mai*.

On the 28th of March the Duke of Wellington was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the armies of the Netherlands, the Prince of Orange having resigned the chief, and accepted a subordinate, command under the Duke. Early on the morning of the 5th of April the Duke reached Brussels; and startling events, each in itself a history, followed in quick succession.

In strength and composition the hostile armies differed essentially from each other; and the numerical estimates given by military writers are so irregular and conflicting, that a careful examination of their various statements is required before an accurate conclusion can be arrived at.

Of the three armies collected on the French frontier,

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that commanded by the Duke of Wellington was the weakest and the worst. It was, with few exceptions, a "green army," formed of a mixed force, comprising British, Hanoverian, and Belgian troops, with the contingents of Nassau and Brunswick Oels. Its effective strength on the 15th of June was 78,500 men, of whom 53,000 only were British, Germans, and Hanoverians. On the 18th, its numbers were considerably reduced: for by that morning's returns, the grand total of the force under the immediate order of the Duke of Wellington was only 74,040 men.

While the French army exceeded the Duke of Wellington's in number, in its composition it was still more superior. The elements for its construction were ready for Napoleon's use—for the country was overrun with soldiers—men, according to Davoust's term, "whose trade was war, and whose battles were as many as their years." From the moment the return of the Emperor was announced, these veterans hurried to his standards. To organize a practised soldiery was comparatively an easy task; and hence the army with which Napoleon crossed the frontier, as far as numbers went, was equal to any that he had ever directed on a battle-field. That commanded by Lord Wellington was formed of very different materials. A mixed force, hastily collected, and imperfectly put together, what unity of operation could be expected in the hour of trial, from men whose languages were unknown to each other—whose dresses were unfamiliar to the eye—whose efficiency was untried—and whose courage and fidelity were doubtful? The greater portion of the Peninsular soldiers had been unfortunately removed beyond recall. The Duke would have been glad of a proportion of Portuguese troops, to be paid by England, but the authorities ungratefully refused to sanction the measure. Half the regiments in Belgium were, therefore, second battalions, composed of militiamen and recruits; and of the contingent troops, many were but recently embodied, and few had ever been under fire; and yet, with this indifferent army, inferior in numbers, in discipline, in equipments, and in artillery, did the Duke of Wellington accomplish a triumph,

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unparalleled even in the series of his own great achievements.

CHAPTER XXII

NAPOLÉON had already directed the initial movements of the detached corps which were to compose his Grand Army. Early in June, the 1st corps was at Valenciennes, the 2nd at Maubeuge, and the head-quarters at Laon. On the 5th and 6th the army of the Moselle broke up from its cantonments round Metz, and advanced by Philipville, while the army of the North united itself to that of the Ardennes, at Beaumont, on the 13th. On his arrival at Avesnes, Napoleon found his whole force in line, and perfectly disposable to launch against that point of the frontier which might appear to him the most assailable. As yet his plans were as little known to his own officers as to those of the Allies; but on the 14th the publication of a general order partially disclosed his intentions; and his last address was made to the last army he was destined to command.

Always on the *qui vive* for clap-traps, he dated his address on the anniversary of the battles of Marengo and Friedland. It was conceived in the accustomed vein,—phrenzied and bombastic. At daylight on the 15th, Napoleon commenced hostilities, when, his 2nd corps having crossed the Sambre, and driven in Ziethen's outposts, the fighting on both sides became determined. Charleroi was obstinately maintained, and although vigorously pressed by the French cavalry, Ziethen retreated with perfect steadiness. That evening Napoleon's head-quarters were at Charleroi, the 3rd corps of his army having been left on the road to Namur, and the 2nd at Gosselins. The night of the 15th was employed by the Emperor in passing his remaining divisions across the Sambre, and by Marshal Blücher in selecting a position on which he might accept battle. The 1st Prussian corps was posted at St. Amand; the 3rd, at Brie; the 4th, at Ligny; and the 2nd in reserve. The attack on Ziethen was communicated to the Duke of Wellington at Brussels,

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at half-past four in the afternoon; but it was merely intimated that a sharp affair of outposts had occurred—for as yet the more serious operations of Napoleon were wrapped in mystery—and whether he would actually become assailant or not was uncertain.

Convinced that the Emperor was determined to enter Belgium, the Duke of Wellington made the necessary dispositions to concentrate his army on the extremity of a position immediately connecting his own left flank with the right wing of the Prussian army. The point on which Wellington's detached corps were directed to unite, was a hamlet called Quatre Bras, standing on the intersection of the great road from Charleroi to Brussels, by that running from Namur to Nivelles. The village is small: and the adjacent country presents a surface in which woodlands and corn-fields are intermixed. The Bois de Bossu is close to the hamlet; and its distance from Brussels is about twenty English miles.

Brussels, from its immediate contiguity to the frontier, and its being the head-quarters of the Commander-in-Chief, was at this period filled by an influx of strangers. On the 15th, no unusual excitement was discernible—the streets were crowded; and although it was believed that Napoleon had joined the army, and consequently was within a few marches of the city, the capital of Belgium appeared gay and undisturbed, as if that dreaded man had still remained an inmate of the Tuileries. The day passed, and rumour was busy; but until the arrival of the Prince of Orange in the evening nothing was known beyond there having been an affair between the outposts. The Duke, after receiving his illustrious visitor, resumed his place at the dinner table; when shortly afterwards, General Muffling, the Prussian general attached to the British army, “came into the room, with evident marks of haste, when a chair was reached, and he was placed next to his Grace, with whom he entered into close conversation, and to whom he delivered some official despatches. The Duke occasionally addressed himself to Sir T. Picton. The movements of the enemy created no surprise—all was quiet and regular, the decisive moment for action was not yet come.

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“The second courier arrived from Blücher before twelve o'clock on the night of the 15th, and the despatches were delivered to the Duke of Wellington in the ball-room of the Duchess of Richmond. While he was reading them he seemed to be completely absorbed by their contents: and after he had finished he remained for some minutes in the same attitude of deep reflection, totally abstracted from every surrounding object, while his countenance was expressive of fixed and intense thought. He was heard to mutter to himself—‘Marshal Blücher thinks,’—‘It is Marshal Blücher’s opinion;’—and after remaining thus abstracted a few minutes, and having apparently formed his decision, he gave his usual clear and concise orders to one of his staff officers, who instantly left the room, and was again as gay and animated as ever:—he staid supper, and then went home.”

But before the ball had ended, the strains of courtly music were drowned in the louder “note of preparation.” The drum had beat to arms, the bugle sounded “the assembly,” and the Highland bagpipe added its wild and martial summons to the field. All were already prepared, all were promptly under arms; and the 5th division filed from the Parc with the corps of Brunswick Oels, and directed their march through the forest of Soignies.

Eight o'clock pealed from the steeple clocks; all was quiet; the brigades, with their artillery and equipage, were gone; the crash of music was heard no longer; the bustle of preparation had ceased; and an ominous and heart-sinking silence succeeded that noise and hurry which ever attends a departure for the field of battle. While Napoleon with his right and centre was attacking the front of the Prussian position, Grouchy manœuvred by the Namur road upon its flank, and simultaneously the 1st and 2nd corps, with four cavalry divisions, were turned against the British positions. When Blücher, on the evening of the 15th, had been defeated at Charleroi, the advanced corps of the Prince of Orange had also been driven back from Frasnes; but a fresh brigade was promptly moved up, and before the morning of the 16th the greater portion of the ground had been recovered. Early in the afternoon, Ney’s attack was made with

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the vigour and determination which superior numbers encourage, and it was gallantly and successfully repulsed. But physical force gradually prevailed; the Hanoverians fell back; the Bois de Bossu was occupied by the enemy; and when the leading regiments of the 5th division reached Quatre Bras, with reduced strength the Prince of Orange was bravely but feebly opposing assailants encouraged by success, and whose superiority could no longer be resisted. A march of more than twenty miles, executed in sultry weather, and over a country where little water was procurable, had abated the vigour of the British brigades, but their spirit was indomitable. The Duke of Wellington had overtaken the column in its march; and when he reached Quatre Bras, he saw at a single glance the critical position of the day, and instantly directed that the Bois de Bossu should be regained.

Ney, whose infantry doubled that of his opponent, sustained by a proportionate artillery, and the fine cavalry division under Exelmans, was pushing his advantages to their crisis. Checked, however, by the arrival of the battalions, he strove to crush them before they could be reinforced, and, under a withering fire of artillery, to break the Hanoverian batteries ineffectively replied, and sent his cavalry against the regiments as they stood on the battle-ground. All was in his favour; his right flank was in hand; the rye-crop, reaching breast height, was in his advance; and the charges were made with great effect. As the regiments were established. But English courage rose superior to the immense numbers, and the circumstances conferred upon their ranks a compactness and in every effort the enemy was roughly repulsed. The Lancers and cuirassiers were driven back with slaughter; while whole squadrons, shattered by the fire, retreated, and leaving the ground covered with their dead and dying, proved with what fatal precision the squares had sustained their fusillade.

The efforts of the French to break the squares were mere and frequent. Their batteries poured upon these unflinching soldiers a storm of grape; and when an opening was made by the cannon, the lancers were ready to rush upon the devoted infantry. But nothing could



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daunt the lion-hearted English—nothing could shake their steadiness. The dead were coolly removed, and the living occupied their places. Though numbers fell, and the square momentarily diminished, it still presented a serried line of glittering bayonets, through which lancer and cuirassier vainly endeavoured to penetrate.

“One regiment, after sustaining a furious cannonade, was suddenly, and on three different sides, assailed by cavalry. Two faces of the square were charged by the lancers, while the cuirassiers galloped down upon another. It was a trying moment. There was a death-like silence; and one voice alone, clear and calm, was heard. It was their colonel’s, who called upon them to be ‘steady.’ On came the enemy! the earth shook beneath the horseman’s feet; while on every side of the devoted band the corn bending beneath the rush of cavalry disclosed their numerous assailants. The lance blades approached the bayonets of the kneeling front rank; the cuirassiers were within forty paces; yet not a trigger was drawn. But, when the word ‘Fire!’ thundered from the colonel’s lips, each face poured out its deadly volley; and in a moment the leading files of the French lay before the square, as if hurled by a thunderbolt to the earth. The assailants, broken and dispersed, galloped off for shelter to the tall rye, while a stream of musketry from the British square carried death into the retreating squadrons.”

But numbers were certain to prevail. The regiments fought with devoted heroism; and though miserably reduced, they still held their ground with a desperate tenacity. Greatly overmatched, the result was tottering in the balance; and nothing but the bull-dog courage of English soldiers could have resisted the desperate pressure. “The contest was at its height—the incessant assaults of the enemy were wasting the British regiments, but, with the exception of the Bois de Bossu, not an inch of ground was lost. The men were falling by hundreds—death was busy everywhere—but not a cheek blanched, and not a foot receded! The courage of these undaunted soldiers needed no incitement—but, on the contrary, the efforts of their officers were constantly required to restrain the burning ardour that would, if unrepressed, have led to

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ruinous results. Maddened to see their ranks thinned by renewed assaults, which they were merely suffered to repel, they panted for the hour of action. The hot blood of Erin was boiling for revenge, and even the cool endurance of the Scotch began to yield; and a murmur was sometimes heard of, 'Why are we not led forward?'

"At this juncture, the division of Guards, under General Maitland, arrived from Enghien, and after a march of fifteen hours, without anything to eat or drink, they gallantly advanced to the charge, and in half an hour completely cleared the wood. Though they became masters of the Bois de Bossu, they found difficulty in emerging from its shelter. As often as they attempted to come out, a tremendous fire of round and grape shot was opened by the French batteries, followed by a charge of cavalry. When they retired, and the enemy endeavoured to penetrate the wood, they were received in turn with a steady and well-directed volley of musketry, which compelled them also to return. These alternate attacks continued for nearly three hours. At one time, the enemy was furiously encountered by a square of Black Brunswickers, while the British, rapidly lining the ditches, kept up a most destructive fire—but the loss was very severe, and the men found great difficulty in forming line again. The undismayed gallantry of the Guards was the more remarkable, as they were composed chiefly of young soldiers, and volunteers from the militia, who had never been in action. Some of these noble fellows were so overcome by fatigue, that when they entered the wood they sunk down, and had only sufficient strength to cheer their comrades to the onset. The carnage was dreadful—the conflict obstinately maintained on either side—the French, from their superiority in cavalry and artillery, committing a slaughter which was well repaid by the terrible fire of the British musketry.

"Evening was now closing in; the attacks of the enemy became fewer and feebler; a brigade and heavy cavalry and horse artillery came up, and, worn out by the sanguinary struggle of six long hours, the assailants ceased their attack, and the 5th division, with the 3rd and the Guards, took up a position for the night on the ground

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their unbounded heroism had held through this bloody day.

“Ney fell back upon the road to Frasnés. The moon rose angrily—still a few cannon-shot were heard after daylight had departed; but gradually they ceased. The fires were lighted, and such miserable provisions as could be procured were furnished to the harassed soldiery; and while strong pickets were posted in the front and flanks, the remnant of the British, and their brave Allies, piled arms, and stretched themselves on the battle-field.”

The failure of the French attack on Quatre Bras, made by veteran troops in very superior numbers, and directed by one of the best and boldest generals of the age, seems unaccountable; and Ney's apology for what all must admit to have been a defeat, is not maintainable. The *corps d'armée* he commanded was, according to the organization practised by Napoleon, perfect in every arm; and in artillery and cavalry it was immensely superior. The force assailed was generally composed of raw soldiers—and being twenty miles in advance of its reserve, the supporting troops reached the ground after the key of the position had been carried. That support consisted merely of infantry; for, from the distance of their cantonments from the field, it was six in the evening before the British batteries and cavalry were able to get up. To complain that the 1st corps “was idly paraded” between Ligny and Quatre Bras, “without firing a shot,” when its presence could have decided the fate of either battle, throws a slur upon Napoleon's generalship, but presents sorry excuse for Ney's discomfiture.

“There is no doubt, that if he could have brought his 1st corps into action, with the addition of 25,000 men, he might have gained ‘a very glorious triumph;’ but it is affirmed that he complained unjustly of the absence of that corps. On the 16th, at noon, he had personally surveyed the position at Quatre Bras, and perceiving but few troops collected, concluded that the English were at too great a distance to arrive in any strength during the day. This opinion he communicated to Napoleon, who, confiding in it, very naturally employed the 1st corps of his army, where he thought it might decide the success

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of his own attack against the Prussians. Besides, in what respect could Ney consider that corps as a reserve, ready to act upon any sudden exigency? It was in the rear of Frasnes, above three miles from the field of battle, a distance which must have precluded it from co-operating in any movements necessary to repel urgent and immediate danger. In fact, the marshal was beaten by a superior bravery which did not enter into his calculations; and that part of his querulous epistle to the Duke of Otranto may be considered as the fallacy of a man more anxious to disguise than reveal the truth.

“The loss sustained by the British and their Allies in this glorious and hard-contested battle amounted to 3750 *hors de combat*. Of course the British suffered most severely, having 316 men killed, and 2156 wounded. The Duke of Brunswick fell in the act of rallying his troops, and an immense number of British officers were found among the slain and wounded. During an advanced movement, the 92nd, after repulsing an attack of both cavalry and infantry, was retreating to the wood, when a French column halted and turned its fire on the Highlanders, already assailed by a superior force. Notwithstanding, the regiment bravely held its ground until relieved by a regiment of the Guards, when it retired to its original position. In this brief and sanguinary conflict, its loss amounted to 28 officers and nearly 300 men.

“The casualties, when compared with the number of the combatants, will appear enormous. Most of the battalions lost their commanding officers; and the rapid succession of subordinate officers on whom the command devolved told how fast the work of death went on. Trifling wounds were disregarded, and men severely hurt refused to retire to the rear, and rejoined their colours after a temporary dressing.”

Like that at Quatre Bras, the conflict at Ligny only closed with daylight. For five hours the struggle had been obstinately continued. Men fell by hundreds, and 200 pieces of artillery were turned against the devoted villages, for whose possession Napoleon and Blücher were contending. Both generals pushed their reserves freely into action; and as soon as one battalion was destroyed,

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another came forward, and mounting over the dead and dying, charged through the blazing houses of Ligny and St. Amand. At four o'clock the fortune of the day was so doubtful that Napoleon hastily called up the 1st corps, whilst Ney had also despatched an aide-de-camp to hurry it to his assistance at Quatre Bras. Night came on—no decisive advantage had been gained—and Blücher, like a wounded lion, although with feebler strength, seemed to fight with additional ferocity.

Darkness, however, enabled Napoleon to carry a village which he had assailed throughout the evening so frequently and furiously, but in vain. In the gloom, a division of French infantry, by a circuitous march, gained the rear of the Prussian corps, while a mass of cuirassiers forced a road at the other side of Ligny. These movements obliged the Prussians to fall back; and they retired leisurely towards Tilly, repelling every attack, and leaving nothing to the enemy but a ruined village, some wounded men, and a few disabled guns, which the state of the roads prevented them from removing.

At daybreak of the 17th the whole of the Allies were up and ready to accept battle; but as the Duke of Wellington had been apprised during the night that Blücher had retreated to unite himself with the 4th corps, and concentrate his army on Wavre, it was necessary for the Allied Commander to maintain his communication with the Prussians, and make a corresponding movement; and accordingly he determined to fall back on a position already chosen, in front of the village of Waterloo.

Napoleon was mistaken in supposing that Blücher intended to rally his *corps d'armée* round Namur, for the marshal, with a sounder judgment, took a line of retreat parallel to what he considered must be that of the Duke of Wellington, who he knew would fall back from Quatre Bras on ascertaining the regressive movements of his Prussian ally. Uncertain as to the route which Blücher had selected, Grouchy's corps, with the cavalry of Pajol and Excelmans, were detached in pursuit, while Napoleon in person hastened his march to bring Wellington to action, and reached Frasnes at nine o'clock on the morning of the 17th.

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The non-arrival of the 6th corps and reserve, however, obliged Napoleon to delay his intended attack until the whole of his corps were on the ground—and his able opponent was in the interval eluding a combat which he had determined to refuse, and retreating leisurely to the position on which he had resolved to accept a battle. This operation in open day was difficult, as the Dyle was in the rear of the Allies, and the long and narrow bridge at the village of Genappe the only means by which the *corps d'armée* could effect its passage. Wellington disposed some horse-artillery and dismounted dragoons upon the heights, and leaving a strong rear-guard in front of Quatre Bras, he succeeded in masking his retreat until, when discovered, it was too late to offer any serious interruption to the regressive movement of the Allies.

Napoleon had already made the necessary dispositions, and his columns were formed for attack, when from the heights above Frasnes, he discovered that nothing was in front but a rear-guard. His cavalry were instantly ordered to pursue; and at Genappe the rival horsemen came in contact. The 7th Hussars and some squadrons of the 11th and 25th Light Dragoons charged without success. Lord Uxbridge, however, repeated the attack with the Life Guards, and the French cavalry were so roughly repelled, that, with the exception of a partial cannonade, too distant to produce effect, the Allied columns fell back to their position without further interruption.

Throughout the day rain had fallen heavily at times; and as evening closed the weather became wild and stormy. The wind was violent, the rain increased, thunder rolled, and lightning flashed vividly; and a more cheerless bivouac than that of the Allies was never occupied by an army before a fearful conflict.

While the troops reposed on the battle-field, the Duke of Wellington, with his general officers and their respective staffs, occupied the village of Waterloo. On the doors of the several cottages the names of the principal officers were chalked; and frail and perishing as was the record, it was found there long after many of those whom it designated had ceased to exist.

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The position which Wellington took up was most judiciously selected. It extended along the front of the forest of Soignies, near the point where the Brussels road is intersected by that from Nivelles. At this point stands the hamlet of Mont St. Jean; and at the debouche of the forest the village of Waterloo is built. The French adopted the former as their designation of the battle of the 18th of June; the latter, however, was chosen by the conqueror, to give a name to his last, and his most glorious victory.

Early in the morning the dispositions of the Allies were completed. The British right reclined on a ravine near Merke Braine, and the left appuied upon a height above Ter la Haye. The whole line was formed on a gentle acclivity, the flanks partially secured by small hollows and broken grounds. The farm-house of La Haye Sainte, in front of the left centre, was defended by a Hanoverian battalion; and the chateau of Hougomont, in advance of the right centre, was held by a part of the Guards, and some companies of Nassau riflemen. Wellington considered this to be the key of his position, and great attention was bestowed upon its defence. In addition to its natural advantages, the walls were crenelated to afford perfect facility for the musketry and rifles of its defenders.

Behind this chain of posts the first line, composed of Wellington's finest battalions, was formed. The second was rather in a hollow, and partially sheltered from the enemy's artillery. The third, composed of cavalry, was in the rear, extending nearly to Ter la Haye.

At the extreme right, the British army obliqued to Merke Braine, and defended the road to Nivelles. The extreme left was in communication with the Prussians by the road to Ohain, leading through the passes of St. Lambert. A corps of observation, under Sir Charles Colville, comprising a large portion of the 4th division, was stationed at Halle, to defend the British right, if attacked, and cover Brussels if it should be turned.

Cooke's division (the Guards) occupied a rising ground beside Hougomont, with its right resting on the Nivelles road. Alten's division was formed behind La Haye

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Sainte, with its left on the road to Charleroi. The Brunswickers were partly in line with the Guards and partly in reserve; and one of their battalions was extended in the wood of Hougomont, *en tirailleur*.

On the left, Picton's division, Lambert's brigade, a Hanoverian corps, and some Dutch troops, extended along the lane and hedge which traverse the undulating ground between Ter la Haye and the road to Charleroi; and the village itself, that of Smohain, and the farm of Papclotte, adjoining the wood of Frischermont, was garrisoned by Nassau troops, under the command of the Prince of Weimar.

No part of the Allied position was remarkable for natural strength; but where the ground displayed any advantages, they had been made available for defence. The surface of the field of Waterloo was perfectly open—the acclivities of easy descent—and the whole had an English appearance of unenclosed corn-fields, in some places divided by a hedge. Infantry movements could be easily effected, artillery might advance and retire, and cavalry could charge. On every point the British position was assailable; and the island soldier had no reliance but in “God and his Grace,” for all else depended on his own stout heart and vigorous arm.

The morning of the 18th was wet and gloomy, but as the day advanced the weather gradually improved. From the Allied position the French were distinctly seen as they came up, forming columns, and making the other preparatory dispositions for a battle. The British divisions were equally exposed to the enemy's view; and when the different brigades were discovered getting into battle-order, Napoleon exhibited mingled feelings of satisfaction and surprise, exclaiming to one of his staff:—*“Ah! je les tiens donc, ces Anglais!”*

About nine o'clock the French dispositions were commenced, and at half-past eleven they were completed. The 1st corps (D'Erlon's) were formed in front of La Haye Sainte, its right extended towards Frischermont, and its left resting on the Brussels road. The 2nd corps, leaving its right on D'Erlon's left, extended itself in the direction of Hougomont with a wood in front. Behind

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these corps was the cavalry reserve of cuirassiers; the grand reserve, consisting of the Imperial Guard, occupying the heights of La Belle Alliance. The 6th corps, under Count Lobau, with the cavalry of D'Aumont, were left in the rear of the French right, to observe the Prussians in the event of their debouching by the Ohain road, through the defiles of Saint Lambert.

Napoleon's own position was with his reserve. There, with his hands behind him, he paced backwards and forward, issuing orders, and observing the progress of his attack. "As the battle became more doubtful, he approached nearer the scene of action, and betrayed increased impatience to his staff by violent gesticulation, and using immense quantities of snuff. At three o'clock he was on horseback in front of La Belle Alliance; and in the evening just before he made his last attempt with the Guard, he had reached a hollow close to La Haye Sainte. Wellington, at the opening of the engagement, stood upon a ridge immediately behind La Haye, but as the conflict thickened where difficulties arose and danger threatened, there the Duke was found. He traversed the field exposed to a storm of balls, and passed from point to point uninjured; and on more than one occasion, when the French cavalry charged the British squadrons, the Duke was there for shelter."

The strength of the British and French armies has been variously and very differently stated. The former, including its corps of observation, which was non-combatant on the 18th, with the Brunswickers, Belgians, and Nassau contingent, amounted to 74,400. The force of the latter (French), from the contradictory statements, is difficult to be determined with accuracy; probably 90,000 would be nearly its amount. Taking its original strength at 145,000, deducting 10,000 *hors-de-combat* in the battles of the 15th and 16th, and reckoning Grouchy's corps at 45,000, we shall find that 90,000 Frenchmen were on the field of Waterloo. Certainly Buonaparte was equal in men, and very superior in artillery; the French parks amounting to 296 pieces, while the British and Belgian guns did not exceed 150.

From daybreak, occasional shots had been interchanged

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between the light troops; but when two mighty armies, and each commanded by the "meteors of an age," were preparing for a terrible and decisive contest, a desultory fusillade scarcely attracted attention. At noon, Joseph Buonaparte directed the 2nd corps to advance against Hougoumont. The British batteries opened on the French masses as they debouched; their own guns covered their advance, and under the crashing fire of 200 pieces of artillery—a fitting overture for such a field—Waterloo opened, as it closed, magnificently!

After a careful reconnaissance, Napoleon determined that the centre of the Allies was the most vulnerable point of the Allied position; and he directed his 2nd corps to advance and carry the important post of Hougoumont.

This place, destined to obtain a glorious celebrity, was an old-fashioned country house, and had once been the residence of a Flemish nobleman. It stood on low ground about three hundred yards in front of the right centre of the Allied line, and close to where it leaned upon the road leading from Nivelles to Waterloo. On one side there was a large farm-yard and out-buildings; on the other, a garden, surrounded by a high brick wall. An open wood covering an area of some three or four acres, encircled the chateau; but as it was free from copse, and the trees stood apart from each other, it only masked the post without adding much to its strength. In this wood some Nassau riflemen were stationed. The house and garden were occupied by the light companies of the Coldstreams and 3rd Guards. A detachment of the 1st battalion was posted in the wood upon the left; and the remainder on a small eminence immediately in the rear of the chateau, as a support to the troops which garrisoned the house and defended the enclosures. The whole force to which the key of the Duke's position was entrusted did not exceed 1800 men, of whom 300 were Nassau sharp-shooters. The troops in the house were commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Macdonnell; and those in the wood by Lord Saltoun.

Shortly before eleven o'clock the enemy's columns were put in motion against Hougoumont, and the battle of Waterloo began. Comprising three divisions, nearly 30,000

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strong, the French attack was made in close columns, supported by the fire of numerous batteries, and the effect was grand and imposing beyond description. As the heads of the enemy's masses rose above the hollow ground which had hitherto concealed their movement, the British artillery opened with round and case-shot; and the French and Nassau light troops commenced a sharp and rapid fusillade. But the latter was forced to yield to numbers—the wood was carried—and the chateau and its dependencies were vigorously and resolutely assaulted.

But the defence was able, as it was obstinate. On the French masses the fire of the English musketry fell with rapid precision; and the perseverance of the enemy only produced a bloodier discomfiture. The French gave ground—the Guards charged from the enclosures—part of the wood was recovered—and the fire of the British howitzers cleared the remainder of it from the enemy. The repulse of Joseph's corps was followed by a tremendous cannonade,—for on both sides every gun which would bear had opened. The fire was furiously continued. Heavy bodies of cavalry were seen in motion: and it was easy to foresee that this terrible cannonade would be followed by more desperate and more extended efforts. On perceiving the French cavalry displayed, the Duke ordered his centre divisions to form squares by battalions; but as this formation exposed them to the fire of the French artillery, they were retired to the reverse of the slope, and there found shelter from a cannonade still fiercely kept up, and as fatally returned from the Allied batteries, whose service all through that trying day was remarkable for its precision and rapidity.

The French attacks were again renewed against Hougoumont—but they were as unavailing as they had proved before. Their artillery fire, however, had become too oppressive to be sustained; the Duke ordered fresh batteries forward to keep it under; and every new effort of the enemy increased the slaughter, but failed in abating either the spirit or the obstinacy of the defence.

At last, despairing of success, the French artillery opened with shells upon the house; the old tower of

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Hougoumont was quickly in a blaze; the fire reached the chapel, and many of the wounded, both assailants and defenders, there perished miserably. But still, though the flames raged above, shells burst around, and shot ploughed through the shattered walls and windows, the Guards nobly held the place, and Hougoumont remained untaken.

While these terrible attacks were continued against the right centre, the left of the Allied position was also furiously assailed. The recession of the English regiments behind the crest in front of which they had been previously formed appears to have misled Napoleon; and a movement intended only to shelter the infantry from the French guns was supposed to have been made with an intention of retreating. Under this belief Napoleon ordered his 1st corps forward, to fall on that part of the position extending between La Haye Sainte and Ter la Haye.

Shortly before two Drouet advanced, drove a Belgian brigade roughly back, and the head of his columns reached the broken hedge that partially marked the 5th division. After repulsing the cavalry, Picton formed line, and moved Kempt's and Pack's brigades forward to meet the anticipated attack. The heads of the enemy's columns were already within forty yards, when the musketry of the 5th division delivered a rolling volley that annihilated the leading sections and produced a visible confusion. Picton saw and seized the crisis, and thundered the word "Charge!" It was the last he uttered, for the next moment a musket bullet perforated his forehead, and he dropped from his saddle a dead man.

The division, however, obeyed the order of their fallen chief, charged through the hedge, and routed their assailants. It was one of those moments which a battle presents, and which, when seized on, restores the fortunes of a doubtful field, and not unfrequently, snatches an unexpected victory. The 2nd cavalry brigade was immediately behind the 5th division, forming a line of 1300 broadswords. Lord Anglesea observing that the French cuirassiers and lancers were preparing for a flank attack upon the British infantry, led on the heavy cavalry; and the Royals, Greys, and Enniskilleners charged with

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a vigour and effect that bore down every opposition. In vain mailed cuirassier and formidable lancer met these splendid horsemen. They were overwhelmed; and the French infantry, already broken and disorganized by the 5th division, fell in hundreds beneath the swords of the English dragoons. The eagles of the 45th and 105th regiments, and upwards of 2000 prisoners, were the trophies of this brilliant exploit.

In cavalry encounters, whether success or defeat attend the charge, to a greater or a less degree the assailants must be disorganized; and acting as the 2nd brigade did at Waterloo, against an arm immeasurably superior, the splendid onset of the British dragoons was eventually repulsed; and in turn, they were obliged to yield to the attack of horsemen whose order was unbroken. Many gallant officers and soldiers fell, and none more regretted than their chivalrous leader, Sir William Ponsonby. Having cut through the first column, he passed on to where Colonel Dorville was so hotly engaged, and found himself out-flanked by a regiment of Polish lancers, on a newly-ploughed field, the ground of which was so soft that the horse could not extricate itself. He was attended by only one aide-de-camp. At that instant a body of lancers approached him at full speed. His own death he knew was inevitable, but supposing that his aide-de-camp might escape, he drew forth the picture of his lady, and his watch, and was in the act of delivering them to his care, to be conveyed to his wife and family, when the enemy came up, and they were both speared on the spot. His body was afterwards found lying beside his horse, and pierced with seven wounds. It is said, however, that he did not fall unrevenged, for the brigade he commanded had an opportunity, before the battle ceased, of again encountering the Polish lancers, almost every one of whom was cut to pieces.

An attack had been simultaneously made by part of D'Erlon's division on the farm-house of La Haye Sainte which had been repelled by the Germans under Baron Alten; and they, in turn, were charged by Milhaud's cuirassiers. But forming square, steadily and rapidly, their assailants galloped on without breaking a battalion,

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and suffered a heavy loss from the musketry of some regiments diagonally placed, whose fire was closely and coolly delivered.

Passing the intervals between the squares, the French cuirassiers topped the crest behind the British infantry. This chivalrous act was recompensed by nothing but its daring; for, before a splendid charge of the Life-Guards, Blues, and 1st Dragoon Guards, that celebrated cavalry, whose prowess had turned the tide of many a doubtful fight, gave way; and in the *mêlée*, hand to hand, steel helmet and cuirass proved no protection against the stalwart arm of the English trooper. The conflict was short and severe, and Milhaud's cavalry were deforced and driven into the valley. Farther to the left, an opportunity of charging an unsteady regiment of French infantry was seized by Colonel Ponsonby. With the 12th Light Dragoons and a Belgian corps, the attack was gallantly made; but in turn, these regiments were assailed by the French lancers, and driven back with serious loss.

Another and more determined attack was made about this period of the battle upon Hougomont—but the Duke had reinforced the weakened garrison—and, favoured by the cover which the houses and inclosures afforded, the fresh assault failed totally. The obstinacy with which Napoleon endeavoured to win this important post may be best estimated by the terrible expenditure of life his repeated attacks occasioned: 8000 men were rendered *hors de combat* in these attempts; and when evening and defeat came, the burning ruins were still in the possession of those gallant soldiers who had held them nobly against so many and such desperate attacks.

It was strange that, throughout the sanguinary struggle, but one success crowned the incessant efforts of Napoleon—the temporary possession of the farm-house of La Haye Sainte. Its defence had been intrusted to Colonel Baring; with a detachment of the German legion, amounting to about 200 men, subsequently reinforced by 200 more. The attack began at one o'clock, and continued above two hours. Several guns were brought to bear upon the house; but the conflict was chiefly maintained by massive columns of infantry, which advanced with such fury

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that the men actually grasped at the rifles of the besieged as they projected through the loopholes. Four successive attempts were thus made, and three times the assailants were gallantly beaten off. Twice the enemy succeeded in setting fire to a barn or out-house, contiguous to the main building; but both times it was fortunately extinguished. The numbers of the garrison at length began to diminish, many were either killed or wounded, and at the same time their ammunition was failing. It became impossible to supply the one or reinforce the other, for there was no practicable communication with the rest of the army. The men, reduced to five cartridges each, were enjoined to be not only sparing of their fire, but to aim well.

A fourth attack was now made, by two columns, stronger than either of the preceding, and the enemy soon perceived that the garrison could not return a shot. Emboldened by this discovery, they instantly rushed forward, and burst open one of the doors; but a desperate resistance was still made with the sword-bayonet, through the windows and embrasures. They then ascended the walls and roof, whence they securely fired down upon their adversaries. This unequal conflict could not long continue, and after an heroic defence the post was surrendered. It is affirmed that the French sacrificed to their revenge every man whom they found in the place. It is at least certain that some individuals were most barbarously treated. The shattered and dilapidated state of the house, after the battle, conspicuously evinced the furious efforts which the enemy made for its possession, and the desperate courage displayed in its defence. The door was perforated by innumerable shot-holes; the roof destroyed by shell and cannon balls; there was scarcely the vestige of a window discernible; and the whole edifice exhibited a melancholy scene of ravage and desolation. Yet, when obtained, it offered no advantage commensurate to the loss with which it had been purchased; for the artillery, in an adjacent ridge, continued to pour down such a destructive and incessant fire, that Napoleon could make but little use of the conquest to promote his subsequent operations.

Still the situation of the Allied army became every

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moment more critical—its own glorious efforts exhausting its strength, and every noble repulse rendering it less capable of continuing what seemed to prove an endless resistance. Though masses of the enemy had fallen, thousands came on anew. With desperate attachment, the French army pressed forward at Napoleon's command; and while each advance terminated in defeat and slaughter fresh battalions crossed the valley; and mounting the ridge with cries of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" exhibited a devotion which has never been surpassed. Wellington's reserves had gradually been brought into action; and the left, though but partially engaged, dared not, weakened as it was, send assistance to the right and centre. Many battalions were miserably reduced, and presented but skeletons of what these beautiful brigades had been when they left Brussels two days before. The loss of individual regiments was prodigious. One had 400 men mowed down in square without drawing a trigger: it lost almost all its officers; and a subaltern commanded it for half the day. Another, when not 200 men were left, rushed into a French column and routed it with the bayonet; a third, when nearly annihilated, sent to require support: none could be given, and the commanding officer was told that he must "stand or fall where he was!"

"No wonder that Wellington almost despaired. He calculated, and justly, that he had an army which would perish where it stood; but when he saw the devastation caused by the incessant attacks of an enemy who appeared determined to succeed, is it surprising that his watch was frequently consulted, and that he prayed for night or Blücher?"

Never did a battle demand more stoical courage than Waterloo from its commencement to its close. Nothing is more spirit-sinking to a soldier than the passive endurance of offence—nothing so intolerable as to be incessantly assailed, and not permitted, in turn, to become the assailant. The ardent struggle for a hard-fought field differs immeasurably from the cheerless duty of holding a position and repelling, but not returning, the constant aggressions of an enemy.

"In an attacking body there is an excited feeling that

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stimulates the coldest, and blunts the thoughts of danger. The tumultuous enthusiasm of the assault spreads from man to man, and duller spirits catch a gallant frenzy from the brave around them. But the enduring and devoted courage which pervaded the British squares when, hour after hour, mowed down by a murderous artillery, and wearied by furious and frequent onsets of lancers and cuirassiers; when the constant order, 'Close up! close up!' marked the quick succession of slaughter that thinned their diminished ranks; and as the day wore later, when the remnants of two, and even three regiments were necessary to complete the square which one of them had formed in the morning—to support this with firmness, and 'feed death,' inactive and unmoved, exhibited a calm and desperate bravery which elicited the admiration of one, to whom war's awful sacrifices were familiar.

"Knowing that, to repel these desperate and sustained attacks, a tremendous expenditure of human life was unavoidable, Napoleon, in defiance of their acknowledged bravery, calculated on wearying the British into defeat. But when he saw his columns driven back in confusion—when his cavalry receded from the squares they could not penetrate—when battalions were reduced to companies by the fire of his cannon, and still that 'feeble few' showed a perfect front, and held the ground they had originally taken—no wonder that his admiration was expressed to Soult—'How beautifully these English fight! But they must give way.'"

Evening came, and yet no crisis. Napoleon, astounded by the terrible repulses which had attended his most desperate attacks, began to dread that the day would have an unfavourable issue; and that Soult's estimate of the stubborn endurance of the English infantry might prove fatally correct. Wellington, as he viewed the diminished numbers of his brave battalions, still presenting the same fearless attitude that they had done when the battle opened, felt that to human endurance there is a limit; and turned his glass repeatedly to that direction from which his expected support must come. At times, also, the temper of the troops had nearly failed; and

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particularly among the Irish regiments, the reiterated question of "When shall we get at them?" showed how ardent the wish was to avoid inactive slaughter, and, plunging into the columns of the assailants, to avenge the death of their companions. But the "Be cool, my boys!" from their officers was sufficient to restrain this impatience—and, cumbering the ground with their dead, they waited with desperate intrepidity for the hour to arrive when the victory and vengeance should be their own! At last, the welcome sound of distant artillery was heard in the direction of St. Lambert, and a staff officer reported that the head of the Prussian column was already in the Bois de Paris. Advised, therefore, that his gallant ally would presently come into action, the Duke made fresh preparations to repel what he properly anticipated would be the last and the most desperate effort of his opponent. Satisfied that his right flank was secure, Lord Hill was directed to send Clinton's division, with Mitchell's brigade, and a Hanoverian corps from the extreme right, towards the centre, which the reinforcement of Hougoumont, by the removal of Byng's brigade, had weakened. Chassé's Dutch division was also moved to the lower ground from Braine la Leud as a support to the right of the position; and subsequently, the light cavalry of Vandeleur and Vivian were both brought forward; and where danger was apprehended, care was taken to have a sufficient force in hand to meet the storm which was presently about to burst.

It is said that Napoleon felt assured that the cannonade which announced Blücher's advance was only the fire of Grouchy's guns, who, in obedience to his repeated orders, had reached the battle-ground alone, or was advancing *pari passu*, and holding Bulow's corps in check. This intelligence was rapidly conveyed along the line; and, to a soldiery easily exhilarated, victory appeared certain, and preparations were made for what was believed to be a final and triumphal attack. But the illusion was brief. The Prussians debouched from the wood at Frischermont—and half Napoleon's right wing was thrown back, *en potence*, to check their attack, while his last grand movement should be executed against the Allied army in his front.

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While Napoleon directed that great effort which he anxiously hoped might prove decisive, the British infantry, which held the threatened point, were laid down on the reverse of the crest they occupied, to obtain shelter from the enemy's artillery. With proverbial intrepidity, the Imperial Guard, in close column, came on to the assault—and nothing could be more imposing than the steadiness with which they ascended the slope of the position, although the fire of the English guns fell upon their dense masses with ruinous precision. Presently, the Guards moved forward to the crest of the height; and the finest infantry in the world confronted each other at the distance of fifty paces. The cheers of the French formed a striking contrast to the soldierlike silence with which the English received the attack; and shouts of *Vive l'Empereur!* were only answered by a rolling volley. The first steady fire of the British Guards disorganized the crowded column—and the fusillade was rapidly and steadily sustained. Vain efforts were made by the French officers to deploy, and the feeble fire of their leading files was returned by a stream of musketry that carried death into ranks in close formation, and every moment increased their disorder. The word to charge was given—the Guards cheered, and came forward—but the enemy declined the contest, and the shattered column hurried down the hill, with the precipitate confusion attendant on a heavy repulse. After routing their opponents, the victorious infantry halted, re-formed, fell back, and resumed their former position.

Nor was the attack of Napoleon's second column more fortunate. After repelling the attack of the first column of the Imperial Guard, Maitland's brigade brought its left shoulders forward to meet the second column, which was now advancing, while Adam's brigade, pivoted on its left, moved its right wing rapidly on, having Bolton's troop of artillery in the angle, where the right of the Guards touched the left flank of the light brigade. Undismayed by the repulse of the first column, the second topped the height in perfect order, and with a confidence which bespoke the certainty of success. But the musketry of Maitland's left wing smote the column heavily in front;

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and the fire of the light regiments fell, with terrible effect, on the flank of the mass, already torn and disordered by the close discharge of grape and case shot from the English battery. The ground in a few minutes was covered with dead and wounded men—the confusion increased—the disorder became irremediable. To stand that intolerable fire was madness—they broke—and like the first column, endeavoured to reach the low ground, where, sheltered from this slaughtering fusillade, they could probably have reorganized their broken array. But this was not permitted. Pressed by the Guards—charged by the 52nd—retreat became a flight, and Wellington completed the *déroute* by launching the cavalry of Vivian and Vandeleur against the mass, as it rushed down the hill in hopeless disorder.

This, indeed, was the crisis of the battle. The Prussian demonstration, slight at first, had latterly become more dangerous and decided. The whole of the 4th corps had now got up, with Pirch's division of the 2nd; and Ziethen's column appeared on the right flank of the French, and rendered Count Lobau's position still more critical. The discomfiture of Ney's attack had produced over the French corps a general unsteadiness; and before it was possible to rally and renew the fight, one grand and general attack decided the doubtful field, and consummated the ruin of Napoleon.

As the French right gradually receded, the Allied line, converging from its extreme points at Merke Braine and Braine la Leud, became compressed in extent, and assumed rather the appearance of a crescent. The marked impression of Blücher's attack; the debouche of Ziethen by the Ohain road; and the bloody repulse inflicted on the Imperial Guard;—all told Wellington that the hour was come, and that to strike boldly was to secure a victory. The word was given to advance. The infantry, in one long and splendid line, moved forward with a thrilling cheer; the horse artillery galloped up, and opened with case shot on the disordered masses, which, but a brief space before, had advanced with such imposing resolution. Instantly, the Allied cavalry were let loose; and, charging headlong into the enemy's columns, they turned retreat

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into rout, and closed the history of one of the bloodiest struggles upon record.

For a short time four battalions of the Old Guard, comprising the only reserve which Napoleon had left unemployed, formed square, and checked the movements of the cavalry. But, panic-stricken and disorganized, the French resistance was short and feeble. The Prussian cannon thundered in their rear; the British bayonet was flashing in their front; and, unable to stand the terror of the charge, they broke and fled. A dreadful and indiscriminate carnage ensued. The great road was choked with the equipage, and cumbered with the dead and dying; while the fields, as far as the eye could reach, were covered with a host of helpless fugitives. Courage and discipline were forgotten. Napoleon's army of yesterday was now a splendid wreck. His own words best describe it—"It was a total rout!"

"Night came; but it brought no respite to the shattered army of Napoleon; and the moon rose upon the 'broken host' to light the victors to their prey. The British, forgetting their fatigue, pressed on the rear of their flying enemy; and the roads, covered with the dead and dying, and obstructed by broken equipages and deserted guns, became almost impassable to the fugitives—and hence the slaughter from Waterloo to Genappe was frightful. But, wearied with blood (for the French, throwing away their arms to expedite their flight, offered no resistance), and exhausted with hunger and fatigue, the British pursuit relaxed, and between Rossomme and Genappe it ceased altogether. The infantry bivouacked for the night around the farm-houses of Caillou and Belle Alliance, and the light cavalry halted one mile further on, abandoning the work of death to their fresher and more sanguinary Allies. Nothing, indeed, could surpass the desperate and unrelenting animosity of the Prussians towards the French. Repose and plunder were sacrificed to revenge; the memory of former defeat, insult, and oppression now produced a dreadful retaliation, and overpowered every feeling of humanity. The *væ victis!* was pronounced, and thousands besides those who perished in the field fell that night beneath the Prussian lance and sabre. In

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vain a feeble effort was made by the French to barricade the streets of Genappe, and interrupt the progress of the conquerors. Blücher forced the passage with his cannon; and so entirely had the defeat of Waterloo extinguished the spirit, and destroyed the discipline, of the remnant of Napoleon's army, that the wild hurrah of the pursuers, or the very blast of a Prussian trumpet, became the signal for flight and terror."

It was a singular accident, that near La Belle Alliance the victorious generals met; for thither Blücher, on forcing the French right, had urged forward his columns in pursuit. Comparatively fresh, the Prussians engaged to follow up the victory; and the Allies left the great road open, and bivouacked on the field.

By moonlight, Wellington recrossed the battle-ground, and arrived for supper at Brussels—an honour which Napoleon had promised to confer upon that ancient city. The excited feelings which such a victory must have produced, are said to have suffered a reaction, and given way to deep despondency, as he rode past "the dying and the dead." God knows, it was "a sorry sight;" for on a surface not exceeding two square miles, 50,000 dead or disabled men and horses were extended.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE apologists for Napoleon lay much stress on Ney's dilatory march on Quatre Bras, and Grouchy's unprofitable movements on the Dyle. The failure of Ney upon the 16th will be best accounted for by that marshal's simple statement. His reserve was withdrawn by Napoleon; and when the Prince of Moskwa required, and ordered it forward, to make a grand effort on the wearied English, the corps was "idly parading" between Quatre Bras and Ligny; and during the arduous struggles at both places, that splendid division had never faced an enemy nor discharged a musket. Ney's failure in his attack was therefore attributable to Napoleon altogether; for had

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his reserve been at hand, who can suppose that the exhausted battalions of the Allies, after a march of two-and-twenty miles and a long and bloody combat, must not have yielded to fresh troops in overpowering masses, and fallen back from a position no longer tenable? To Grouchy's imputed errors, also, the loss of Waterloo has been mainly ascribed by Napoleon and his admirers. But neither was that marshal's conduct obnoxious to the censure so unsparingly bestowed upon it; nor, had he disobeyed orders and acceded to the proposition of his second in command, would a movement by his left have effected anything beyond the delay of Napoleon's overthrow for a night. By following Gerard's advice, and marching direct on Waterloo, the day would have ended, probably, in a drawn battle; or even Wellington might have been obliged to retire into the wood of Soignies. But in a few hours Blücher would have been up; in the morning the Anglo-Prussian army would have become the assailant, and with numbers far superior, who will pretend to say that Napoleon's defeat upon the 19th, would not have been as certain and as signal as his *déroute* at Waterloo, upon the fatal evening that closed upon a fallen empire and a last field?

Waterloo, as a battle, has no striking event to distinguish it from other actions, and no grand military conception marked a field devoid of scientific display. Napoleon's plan was to weary out the endurance of the English infantry; and at what expense, appears to have been with him a very secondary consideration. "When evening came, no doubt he began to question the accuracy of his 'military arithmetic,'—a phrase happily applied to his meting out death by the hour. Half the day had been consumed in a sanguinary and indecisive conflict; all his disposable troops but the Guard had been employed, and still his efforts were foiled; and the British, with diminished numbers, showed the same bold front they had presented at the commencement of the battle." Nor when attacked by that Guard, whose advance into a doubtful fight had hitherto wrested victory from the most obstinate, did the fortunes of the day waver. Surrounded and on every side assailed, not a square gave way. "In

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this terrible situation, neither the bullets (*boulets*, cannon-balls) of the Imperial Guard, discharged almost point-blank, nor the victorious cavalry of France, could make the least impression on the immovable British infantry. One might have been almost tempted to fancy that it had rooted itself in the ground, but for the majestic movement which its battalions commenced some minutes after sunset, at the moment when the approach of the Prussian army apprised Wellington he had just achieved the most decisive victory of the age."

The endeavour made to shift the cause of his failure upon those who had always served him so devotedly, will be adduced as a trait of meanness in Napoleon's character, and totally unworthy of its greatness. Never did the French army in their palmy days fight with more determination. Never were they more heroically led on, nor were their officers more distinguished for their gallantry. If the chroniclers of Napoleon when in exile can be credited, all were nevertheless included in one sweeping condemnation. But facts are stubborn things; and to these must be opposed the querulous complaints of a fallen man, whose last days were embittered by the memory of what he had been, and outraged by a coarse-minded individual, and by the imposition of unnecessary restrictions. If, at Quatre Bras, his first corps were non-combatant, and Ney failed in an attack, which, with D'Erlon's assistance, must have proved, *quantum valeat*, successful, was it not by Napoleon's special instructions that the 1st corps was withdrawn from the point where it was required, and "idly paraded" towards Ligny, where it remained unemployed? Was Grouchy censurable for obeying orders, which were not countermanded until Waterloo was lost? Was Soult wanting in duty, when he communicated the results of his own experience, and assured the Emperor that he was wasting his superb cavalry in idle efforts to deforce infantry which would never give way? What, after Waterloo was won, and hope had ended—what even then was the conduct of Napoleon's generals? Grouchy's retreat was an admirable operation; and many instances could be adduced to prove that a chivalrous spirit actuated the French

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officers, and every personal feeling gave way before the calls of duty.

To impute to Napoleon any want of courage and intrepidity would be to make a charge falsified by the actions of a daring and adventurous career; but certainly, at Waterloo, he appeared to attach an importance to his personal security, which, though correct in an abstract view, was not in keeping with the bearing of a soldier, staking "his life upon a cast." A charge of an opposite description might be made against "the iron Duke," for he as recklessly exposed himself. Had the issue been otherwise—had a bloody and decisive defeat closed the history of a bloody day, we have little doubt but Wellington would have done what Napoleon ought to have done—died at the head of the last battalion which, with desperate fidelity, still presented its front to the enemy!

CHAPTER XXIV

HAVING annihilated the army of Flanders, the Allied commanders determined to push on to Paris. Before we follow them, a few words on the operations of Grouchy would seem to be indispensable to the completeness of our narrative. Detached by Napoleon, in pursuit of Blücher, on the 17th he halted at Gembloux, and the next morning continued his advance on Wavre. On the 18th he drove the Prussians from the right bank of the Dyle, but wasted the day in vain attempts to cross that river, which was resolutely held at Thielman. Well aware, from the cannonade in the direction of Waterloo, that the Emperor was hotly engaged, the Marshal made a strenuous attempt to force a passage, believing that the whole Prussian army was in his front. At Limale, however, he passed the Dyle, and bivouacked on the left bank of the river. On the 19th he was attacked by Thielman, who was repulsed and driven back; but the tidings of the terrible disaster at Waterloo reached both generals early in the day, when Grouchy retired, crossed the Sambre, and marched upon Dinant, closely pursued by the

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Prussians. The Marshal's retreat was very ably effected, and he reached Paris on the eighth day, after sustaining but little loss save in artillery. The army of Marshal Blücher entered France by Charleroi and Beaumont, and that of the Duke of Wellington moved by Nivelles to Bavay, the main bodies of both armies crossing the frontier on the 21st of June.

In passing through Nivelles, on the 20th the Duke issued a general order to his troops, reminding them that the Allied Sovereigns were in alliance with the King of France, and that the country they were about to enter ought to be considered a friendly one. He, therefore, directed that nothing should be taken from the inhabitants without payment. On entering the French territory he put forth a proclamation, to the effect that he had not come as an enemy, excepting to "the usurper"—"the common enemy," to whom neither truce nor peace would be granted; and he assured the inhabitants that if they would remain peaceably at their homes they would receive protection, whilst those who should absent themselves, or continue to serve the usurper, would be treated as enemies, and their property applied to the subsistence of his army.

The fortresses on the northern frontier of France being garrisoned chiefly by invalids, or national guards, offered little resistance to the progress of the Allies. Avesnes surrendered to the Prussians on the 21st, and Blücher left troops to blockade Landrezy and Maubeuge, whilst a portion of the force under Prince Frederiek of the Netherlands remained to observe Le Quesnoi and Valenciennes. The Duke of Wellington's army, now reinforced by the *corps d'armée* under Prince Eugene of Wirtemberg, and the troops of Saxony, pressed on towards Paris. Meanwhile the wreck of Napoleon's army had reached Laon, but in no condition to offer any resistance to the progress of the victors. Grouchy's corps, which was also directed on Laon, and the 3rd, under General Rapp, posted near Strasbourg, were the only effective troops towards which Bonaparte could look for immediate support. The citadel of Cambray surrendered on the 25th, to which place the King of France, who had quitted Ghent, and followed

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in the rear of the Anglo-Allied army, proceeded. On the 25th Peronne was attacked, and captured the same afternoon; and garrisons were left in both places. At Peronne, the Duke had another narrow escape of his life. The commandant having consented to capitulate, the Duke, who was anxious to obtain immediate possession of the fortress, proceeded in person to one of its gates, to wait until it should be opened. Directing his staff to get under shelter in the ditch of an occupied outwork, he posted himself in a sallyport of the glacis. A staff officer having a communication to make to his grace, and believing that he had already entered the place, came suddenly upon him, and thus drew the enemy's attention to his presence, when a howitzer loaded with grape was treacherously discharged in the direction of the spot on which he stood, which shattered the wall beside him, "making" to use the words of one of his staff who saw him immediately after its discharge, "his blue coat completely red."

The enemy attacked Marshal Blucher's corps at Villers Cotterets on the 28th, but the main body coming up, they were driven off with the loss of six pieces of cannon and 1000 prisoners. They were subsequently attacked by General Bulow, who took from them 500 prisoners, and drove them across the Marne. The advanced guard of the Allied army, under the command of the Duke of Wellington, crossed the Oise on the 29th, and was followed by the whole corps on the 30th, which immediately took up a position with its right upon the height of Rochebourg and its left in the Bois de Bondy. Blucher, having taken the village of Aubevilliers on the 30th of June, moved to his right, and crossed the Seine at St. Germain immediately afterwards, placing his right on Plessis Piquet, his left at St. Cloud, and his reserve at Versailles. Meanwhile, the enemy had fortified strongly the height of Montmartre and the town of St. Denis; inundating, by means of the small rivers, Rouillon and La Vieille Mer, the approaches on the north side of the town. The heights of Belleville were also fortified. Having collected in Paris all the troops remaining after the battle of the 18th, Napoleon was supposed to have at his disposal, for the defence of the city from 40,000 to 50,000 troops of the line and

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Guards, besides the national guards, a new levy called the "tirailleurs de la garde," and the "fédérés."

Blücher was strongly opposed in taking his position on the left of the Seine, and especially on the heights of St. Cloud and Meudon; but he soon surmounted every obstacle, and succeeded in establishing himself on the hill of Meudon and in the village of Issy. The French attacked him again at the latter point on the 3rd of July, but were repulsed with considerable loss. Finding that Paris was now open on its vulnerable side; that a communication had been established between the two Allied armies by a bridge at Argenteuil; and that a British force was moving on the left of the Seine towards the Pont de Neuilly; the enemy sent a flag of truce to request that the firing might cease on both sides of the river, with a view to the negotiation at the Palace of St. Cloud of a military convention between the armies, under which the French army should evacuate Paris. To this the Duke of Wellington gave his assent, and a convention was agreed to accordingly, and was ratified by the Duke and Marshal Blücher on one side, and the Prince of Eckmühl on the other; the chief obstacle to a suspension of hostilities having been removed by the departure of Napoleon on the 2nd of July, for Rochefort. The chief stipulations of the armistice were—1st, that the Allies should halt in their present position; 2nd, that the French army should evacuate Paris and cross the Loire, and 3rd, that the city should be held by the national guards until the king should order it otherwise. On the 4th, St. Denis, Neuilly, and other posts held by the enemy, were given up to the Allies, and the French army having commenced its march to the Loire, the barriers of Paris were delivered over to the Allied armies on the 6th. On the following day the white replaced the tri-coloured cockade, and Louis XVIII. made his public re-entry into Paris.

Although we do not profess to be writing the life of Napoleon, a brief account of his flight from Waterloo, and subsequent movements, may not be unacceptable. Passing hurriedly through the wreck of his ruined army, he reached Genappe at half-past nine. Here his flight was so materially impeded by the mass of fugitives, carriages,

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and cannon which had accumulated in apparently inextricable confusion, that his chance of escape was at one time very remote. Having at length struggled through these obstructions, he hastened on to Quatre Bras, where, by a misapprehension of his guide, he again narrowly escaped capture. At Gosselies, he seems to have recovered his tranquillity, and dismounting from his horse, proceeded on foot to Charleroi, passing on without delay until he reached the meadow of Marcenelle, where he halted with a portion of his staff.

His attendants pitched a tent upon the green, and lighted a fire. A sack of corn was loosely thrown on the ground, and the jaded horses of the fugitive group were permitted to refresh themselves. Wine and food having been procured, Napoleon partook of both; and this was the first nourishment he had received since he had breakfasted at eight o'clock at the farm-house of Bossu. "From the moment he left his last position in front of La Belle Alliance till he rested at the bridge of Marcenelle, he preserved a gloomy silence. About two in the morning he called for his horse, and Count Bertrand having procured a guide, the whole party followed the route to Paris, where they arrived after dark on the 20th. He repaired with his companions at once to the Palais Elysée, where they consumed the night in fruitless consultations, and in framing a bulletin of the battle." In vain did Napoleon demand men and money: he had exhausted his resources of every kind. With 60,000 disciplined troops he was now to meet the shock of confederated Europe; for at Waterloo he had only encountered their advance guard. His only alternative was abdication; and on the 22nd of June he formally renounced the throne in favour of the King of Rome, and a provisional government composed of Fouché, Caulaincourt, Carnot, Grenier, and Quinette. This conditional resignation was, however, repudiated by the Chamber of Peers; and finding that the Allies were at the gates of Paris, and would listen to no terms to which he was to be a party, he at length consented to withdraw it. Several days having been consumed in idle attempts to evade the British cruisers, he gave himself up to Captain Maitland of the *Bellerophon*, who immediately sailed

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to England with his Imperial captive. In a short time the French army gave a reluctant submission to the King's authority, and the whole kingdom became tranquillized. Such were the great results of the battle of Waterloo.

The same sense of justice which had uniformly characterized the conduct, public and private, of the Duke of Wellington, still continued to influence all his relations with the French government. In regard to the final disposition of the person of Napoleon Bonaparte, he insisted that it should be determined by common accord; "Blücher," said his Grace, in an official letter to a personal friend, "wishes to kill him, but I have advised him to have nothing to do with so foul a transaction: if the Sovereigns wish him to be put to death, they should appoint an executioner, which should not be me." His Grace was equally strenuous in his opposition to the proposal for a levy of one hundred millions of francs on the city of Paris, which had emanated from the same quarter. Blücher wished to revenge on Napoleon and on the French nation the injuries which had been inflicted on his countrymen; but the Duke of Wellington would listen to no measure which was not dictated by the necessities of public justice. It was, indeed, altogether at his instance that the conquered country was permitted to make as favourable terms with its victors as it did. Neither would he allow any of the public monuments of Paris to be defaced. He insisted that the proposed destruction of the bridges of Jena and Austerlitz and the contemplated levy on Paris, were wholly at variance with the promises held out by the convention; and had little difficulty in bringing the Allied powers to his own way of thinking, so far as the destruction of the two bridges was concerned. Whatever might have been his private opinion of the policy of the extreme measures adopted towards Labe-doyere and Marshal Ney, he declined on the same principle any official interference in their behalf, although the confession was wrung from him that the terms of the convention afforded them no protection. "The object of the 12th article," says he, in this memorandum on this subject, "was to prevent the adoption of any measures of severity under the military authority of those who made it,

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towards any persons in Paris, on account of the offices which they had filled, or their conduct or political opinions: but it was never intended, and could not have been intended, to prevent either the existing French government, or any French government that might succeed it, from acting in this respect as it might deem fit."

During the period of the Duke's residence at the Elysée, a captain's guard of honour was always mounted before his palace. This ordinary circumstance was perverted into a preparation for firing on the people. Yet, some protection was shown to be necessary, by the fact of more than one resolute attempt to assassinate him.

His Grace continued to reside in the palace of the Elysée Bourbon until the 29th of June, 1816, when he quitted Paris for London with a numerous suite, and was received throughout his route on the British shore with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of respect by all orders of persons. The alleged cause of his departure from France was delicacy of health, for which a course of Cheltenham waters had been prescribed. A few days previous to his departure he gave a grand entertainment, to which had been invited all the notabilities (including the Bourbon princes of Paris). In the course of the evening, a smoke was observed to ascend from the lower part of the house, and on investigating the cause, it was found to proceed from an oiled rag, which was burning near a large quantity of gunpowder, and between two barrels of oil. It was extinguished and the train removed, when the Duke, having been informed of the occurrence, enjoined silence until the company had retired. This atrocious design seems to have been intended to produce a similar tragedy to that which attended the gala given by Prince Schwartzburg, in honour of the marriage of the Archduchess with Napoleon. The attempt, however, proved as futile as those which had preceded it, and its authors do not seem to have been discovered.

During his Grace's stay at Cheltenham he appeared with the Duchess and his children very much in public, and his presence drew vast numbers of visitors to the place. This brief term of relaxation having improved his health, he returned to London, where he was received as usual

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with the warmest acclamations. In the autumn of the year he resumed his duties in Paris. Before he left England, a mortar, taken from the French at Cadiz, had been presented to the Prince Regent, with a request that it might be placed in one of the royal parks of England. In accordance with this desire, his Royal Highness directed that a magnificent carriage should be manufactured for it, and that it should be mounted on the parade of the Horse Guards, as a record of the glorious victory gained at Salamanca, and of the services of the Duke of Wellington and his troops on that occasion. It bears a Latin inscription, which states that it is designed to commemorate the raising of the siege of Cadiz, in consequence of the glorious victory obtained by the Duke of Wellington over the French near Salamanca, on the 22nd of July, 1812.

Having purchased a mansion in London which had formerly belonged to Lord Apsley, the Duke caused it to be partially rebuilt in a style accordant with his rank and position in society. This task was entrusted to Mr. Benjamin Wyatt, who succeeded in converting the original ill-designed and inconveniently arranged edifice into its present form. The interior of the house was fitted up in a style worthy of its owner; its chief decorations being noble works of art which he had purchased, from time to time, abroad and at home, or which had been presented to him. One apartment, devoted to pictures and statuary illustrative of the great events with which he had been associated, was characteristically entitled the Waterloo Gallery, and here once a year, on the anniversary of his crowning exploit, he gave for many years a splendid banquet to a body of officers, survivors of the battle, who had been present with him on the occasion. A leading ornament of this splendid saloon was the colossal statue of Napoleon Bonaparte. It had arrived in Paris when the star of the ex-Emperor's popularity was in a state of total eclipse. Without even unpacking it, Louis XVIII. directed that it should be forwarded to the Prince Regent of England; who, thinking it would be an appropriate ornament to the Waterloo Gallery of Apsley House, transferred it to the Duke of Wellington.

Whilst the Prince was enriching the Duke's gallery with

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statuary, the people of England were engaged in providing for him a national home, that might continue an heirloom to his posterity.

On the 9th of November, 1817, the parliamentary commissioners who had been entrusted with the grateful duty of purchasing a suitable estate for the Duke of Wellington, concluded an agreement with Lord Rivers for the mansion and demesne of Strathfieldsaye in Hampshire, for the sum of 263,000*l.*; the timber on the estate having been valued at 150,000*l.*

On the 28th of September, 1818, a Congress of the Allied Sovereigns was held at Aix-la-Chapelle, to discuss the propriety of withdrawing their armies of occupation. France was comparatively tranquil, and had discharged, so far, all her engagements; she had, therefore, a title to the concession.

Returning to England so soon as the Congress had closed its sittings, the Duke of Wellington was, on the 26th of December, 1818, appointed Master-General of the Ordnance, a post which he was peculiarly qualified to fill with advantage to the service. Early in the ensuing year he took his seat in the House of Lords, and was most zealous in support of the vote of thanks proposed to the Marquis of Hastings for his distinguished services in India.

On the 24th of May, 1819, the Duke of Wellington was invited to attend Kensington Palace on the day on which the Duchess of Kent gave birth to a princess, whom his Grace had the gratification to serve, in various capacities, when, eighteen years afterwards, she became Queen of England.

About this period numerous complimentary testimonials were in progress in various parts of his own country, and several public dinners were given in honour of the Duke; and many splendid presents reached him from the crowned heads of Europe. Among the last-mentioned tributes were a magnificent dessert service from the King of Saxony, of unrivalled beauty, and a magnificent service of plate from the King of Portugal. The Damask Manufactory at Great Schonaw, near Zitta, also presented him with a quantity of superb specimens of their damask.

Of the approval of his Sovereign he was continually

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predecessors, it soon became evident that his habits of business were first-rate, and that he possessed many of the higher and more important qualifications for his office. One thing appeared to be certain, namely, that he was the least luxurious First Lord of the Treasury that had ever wielded the destinies of a nation; for we owe to his prying assailants an account of his daily life, which proves that his powers of endurance and application were of no ordinary kind. It was stated in most of the public journals of the time, on what was deemed competent authority, that his Grace slept upon a mattress spread upon an iron camp-bedstead; that he rose regularly at seven o'clock in the morning, breakfasted at eight, and immediately afterwards applied himself sedulously to his official duties; that on the arrival of the post, it was his undeviating practice to append at once to every application, such instructions as would enable his secretary to reply to it with little chance of a misinterpretation of his meaning; and that soon afterwards he mounted his charger, and proceeded to the Treasury, where he remained engaged in business until five o'clock, unless summoned to attend a privy council or a meeting of the cabinet.

The worst part of the business, so far as laggards were concerned, was, that he was accustomed to exact from others some portion of the punctuality he was always prepared to observe himself; and many are the anecdotes that have been related, from time to time, of his attempts to reform the habits of the subordinate civil officers of the crown. One of his characteristics was, that he would not admit of the existence of a difficulty. With him nothing seemed impossible that fell within the scope of his duty. Wishing to get rid of some of the perplexity which encumbered a portion of the public accounts of the Treasury, and being assured that the thing was impracticable, he is said to have remarked, "Never mind; if *you* cannot accomplish it, I will send you in half-a-dozen pay-serjeants who will." The menaced incursion was of course averted by the achievement of the impossibility. It was, he was accustomed to assert, to his habits of discipline, applied to matters sometimes trivial in them-

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selves, that he stood indebted for a large portion of his success in life. His mind was like the trunk of the elephant, which can tear up an oak, or can pick up a pin.

By nature, strengthened by habit, the Duke of Wellington was possessed of strong bodily activity. He could, indeed, endure a greater amount of fatigue than most young men of his time. The number of official duties he not only undertook, but really performed effectively, was very great; and even then he seemed to have leisure for exercise, visits of courtesy to his friends and acquaintance, charitable and political meetings, and other demands upon his time. It was at this period of great political excitement that the improvements in Windsor Castle, from the plans of Sir Jeffrey Wyatville, were commenced. To superintend the erection of these additions and adaptations three commissioners, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Farnborough, and the Duke of Wellington, had been appointed; and the attention which the premier, notwithstanding his many public duties, was enabled to devote to them, was a matter of surprise to all who were acquainted with the number and importance of his avocations. On the opening of spring, he might be seen at seven o'clock in the morning, in either Hyde Park or the enclosure of St. James's Park, enjoying his accustomed walk; whence, after two hours' exercise, he returned to Apsley House. In the afternoon he was frequently to be found at some public meeting, or making what he was accustomed to consider his morning calls.

On one occasion, having presided at the City of London Orphan Establishment, he proceeded from its rooms to visit a French play, at the English Opera House, and thence to a party given by the lady of the Dutch Ambassador. Indeed, no grand entertainment was considered to have gone off with *éclat*, if the Duke had not looked in some time or other of the evening. Aware how anxiously his presence was expected, he usually endeavoured to gratify his friends by responding to their invitations, if only for half an hour, and in the exercise of such duties—for in that light he considered them—he has been known to make his appearance at four or five entertainments on the same evening. He rode a good deal on

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horseback, but does not appear to have been a very careful equestrian, for although never seriously hurt, he was more than once thrown. In the midst of his many avocations, his own private interests and those of his family were never neglected.

The results of his great experiment in favour of the Roman Catholics had opened his eyes to the characteristics of popular gratitude. The golden age had not arrived, nor had the lion and the lamb laid down together, as had been anticipated. On the contrary, Mr. O'Connell and his brother agitators were more rampant than ever. In Ireland, the Anti-union Association distinctly claimed an Irish parliament and a total separation from this country. "May others imitate the French and the Belgians," had become a popular toast in that country with the Roman Catholic party; and at a public dinner in Killarney, Mr. O'Connell declared his belief that "Ireland would never enjoy perfect liberty until the Church was severed from the State." Instead of having earned the gratitude and good opinion of the Irish Roman Catholics, the Duke was rewarded only with insult and obloquy. O'Connell spoke of him as the "stunted corporal," and declared that the Emancipation Bill had been extorted from his fears, rather than conceded by his sense of justice; and that the Irish people regarded it merely as one instalment of a debt, which they meant to be paid in full at the first convenient opportunity. All this was not the less mortifying because it was precisely the result which the Duke's *quondam* Protestant friends had predicted. To these vexations were added disturbances in the English agricultural districts; incendiary fires, destruction of machinery, and other proofs of the discontent and ill-feeling of the humbler classes. The revolutions of France and Belgium gave a fresh impetus to these elements of evil, and rendered an unusual degree of vigilance on the part of the authorities indispensable. The Duke was assured, in vain, that the great panacea for this unwholesome state of things was parliamentary reform. He doubted the fact, and refused to pledge himself to any such remedy. One of the most useful, well-timed, and important measures of the session had

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been the establishment of the new police; but the demagogues who were engaged in the above-mentioned peaceable operations had no desire to have their amusements interrupted by any such interposition. The Duke was accordingly pursued from his residence to the House of Lords, from time to time, with the fiercest execrations, and cries of "No police, no police!" Nay, to such an extent were outrages against his person carried, that he was on one occasion severely hurt by a blow from a stone in his face.

A dissolution of parliament at such a crisis, and a re-election of the national representatives, attended by every species of outrage and intimidation, was not calculated to contribute very materially to the public tranquillity. The reform furor was now at its height. Reform was to make every one happy and independent; bribery and borough-mongering were to be heard of no more; and patriotism of the most disinterested character was to be the order of the day. Unhappily for the opponents of the proposed Bill, it could not be denied that some reform was really called for, and that the refusal of the very moderate instalment which had been demanded in the previous session had provoked a demand for a very largely increased quantity of the article. But the Duke, on this question at least, was inexorable; but a thorough reform parliament having been elected, it was no longer necessary that the introduction of such a measure should wait upon his will. On this occasion, however, his characteristic foresight failed him; for the Reform Bill, if far from perfect, has produced none of the baneful effects which was looked for from its operation.

The new parliament met in November, and at the opening of the session the Duke of Wellington volunteered his memorable anti-reform declaration, "that the country already possessed a legislature which answered all the good purposes of legislation; that the system of legislation possessed the full and entire confidence of the country; and that he was not only not prepared to bring forward any measure of reform, but would resist any such measure as long as he held any station in the government of the country." This declaration gave the *coup de grâce* to

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his ministry, and appeared to increase the public appetite for the prohibited food. What was formerly a wish had now assumed the character of a fierce demand, and revolution was threatened as the alternative of the refusal of radical reform; and so insane was the hostility with which this great public benefactor was pursued by a brutal and ungrateful populace, that it was not until many of the windows of Apsley House had been demolished, and a great risk incurred of injury to the treasures of art and *virtu* which it contained, that he was compelled to protect its inmates and its decorations by iron blinds, altogether impervious to the missiles of radical reformers. Nor was the spirit of outrage confined to his town residence alone.

After he had quitted Strathfieldsaye to attend to his duties in Parliament, an attempt was made to set fire to the church adjacent to the mansion. Some miscreant, having obtained admission during the night, lighted a fire in the stove of his Grace's pew; but the flame having fortunately attracted the notice of one of his servants, the contemplated mischief was averted. As the doors and windows of the church were found fastened in the usual manner, and the keys had not been out of the possession of the pew-opener during the whole of the preceding day, the object of the persons by whom the fire had been kindled could not be mistaken. Such was the treatment experienced by the hero of a hundred fights at the hands of a people whom he had saved from the domination of foreign despotism; such the reward he received for the sacrifices of political opinion he had made on their behalf.

In this conjuncture of affairs, the Duke accepted the only alternative which presented itself, and withdrew along with Sir Robert Peel from the government. The accession of Lord Grey, with a *carte blanche* to make as many new peers as the urgency of the case might require, converted the probability of radical reform into certainty. The Duke, although he fell, of course, into the ranks of the opposition, offered no factious hostility to such measures of the government as appeared to him likely to benefit the country.

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During the progress through the two Houses of the Reform Bill, the mob everywhere exhibited the most determined hostility to all who declined to take part in the popular movement; and the property of the Duke of Wellington had become once more the object of its attacks. Among other attempts to annoy him, a gang of ruffians, pretending to be poachers, entered his preserves at Strathfieldsaye, and deliberately commenced the extermination of his game; and one of his Grace's gamekeepers was killed in his endeavours to protect his master's property. In London, the mob which formed the tail of the Corporation, when it repaired in procession to present a petition to the Houses of Parliament, resumed their attack upon Apsley House; and had it not been for its iron defences, would in all probability have done irreparable mischief. Having been driven away by the police, aided by the servants of the establishment, they proceeded to the statue of Achilles, in Hyde Park, which they attempted unsuccessfully to injure. With the exception of the houses of the Marquis of Londonderry, the Marquis of Bristol, and of Lord Dudley, no other violence was committed on this occasion. A short time afterwards, Nottingham Castle, the property of the Duke of Newcastle, was burned to the ground by a riotous pro-reform mob.

On the rejection of the Reform Bill by the House of Lords, the grossest outrages on property were committed in all parts of the country, and the Birmingham Trades' Union, some 50,000 strong, offered to march to London and place their services at the disposal of the reform party. Night after night, in their passage to and from the house of Lords, the persons of the noblemen who were among the opponents of the bill were outraged in the most disgraceful manner. The Duke of Wellington, however, undismayed by the storm of public indignation, persevered in his opposition to the last, and but for the protection occasionally afforded him by the better classes, might have been seriously injured by the violence of which he was the object. That the system of action might be complete at all points, a patent of precedence was bestowed upon O'Connell (to the prejudice of a much better lawyer and

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more respectable man), although he had recently been prosecuted to conviction for sedition. On the re-introduction of the Reform Bill, in 1832, it obtained increased support, and, with the aid of a large number of new Peers pitchforked into the House for the purpose, was carried by a majority of nine.

On the sudden dissolution of the cabinet of Lord Melbourne, 15th of November, 1834, the king again sent for the Duke of Wellington, and requested his advice and assistance in the formation of a new cabinet, when his Grace recommended his Majesty to place Sir Robert Peel at the head of the Treasury. Sir Robert was at that time travelling in Italy; and until his return the Duke was compelled to discharge the duties of Premier, as well as those of several other offices of the state; but soon after the opening of Parliament, the Whigs resumed office with increased strength, and with the Duke's retirement on this occasion, his ministerial duties ceased altogether.

The French revolution of 1848, which drove the Orleans family from the throne and the country, appears to have impressed a comparatively small body of English Chartists (the dregs of their order) with the notion that they might make a similar experiment in this country with success; and under the tutelage of that crack-brained Irish reformer, Mr. Feargus O'Connor, they endeavoured to persuade the public, through their placards and the press, that they intended to meet 300,000 strong on the 10th of April of that year; thus creating for a time no inconsiderable alarm. True or false, it became indispensable to make provision for the emergency: then it was that the British Commander-in-Chief proved to demonstration that age had in no respect impaired his intellectual energies. Stealthily and unobserved, troops and cannon were stationed at all points of London and the suburbs, where danger seemed likely to arise; and such were the preparations, that had the Chartists persisted in their menaced attempt at insurrection, hardly a man would have escaped. Although the troops under arms were nowhere to be seen, they were known to be at hand in great strength; and so dismayed were the pot-valiant agitators, that it required only the police and the special constables to deal with them.

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and instead of bringing 300,000 to the field, they could hardly muster ten. Nothing, however, could have been more complete than the military arrangements of the Duke. This completeness was made a matter of reproach by the economists of the House of Commons, but his Grace had put in practice his old maxim, that prevention is better than cure, and that it was better to sacrifice a few thousand pounds in preparations that might prove unnecessary, than incur the risk of a popular outbreak, which might occasion the slaughter of many hundreds of men. Ignominiously defeated in their attempts to fright the isle from its propriety, the Chartists have ever since ceased to excite any alarm. On the occasion in question, indeed, the demonstration was confined almost exclusively to the Socialist Chartists—the very worst samples of the class.

The general health of the Duke had, with the exception of a single attack a few years before, been so good, that notwithstanding his great age and increasing bodily infirmities, no immediate fears were entertained of the loss which the country has since been called upon to sustain. On the 14th of September, however, the startling intelligence of his sudden demise reached London from Walmer. He was then in residence at Walmer, and having dined heartily on venison, had retired to bed in his accustomed health. On the preceding day he had taken his usual exercise in the grounds attached to the castle, and having inspected the stables, had given directions with reference to a journey to Dover, which he had proposed to take on the succeeding day. His appetite was observed to be keener than usual, but not the slightest indication of illness presented itself to those around him.

On Tuesday morning, however, when his valet went to his room to awaken him at his accustomed hour of rising, he found him breathing rather heavily, as was usual with him, and retired. On returning to him in about an hour, his Grace desired him, without mentioning his wish to the family, to send down to Deal for his apothecary, and say that he wished to see him immediately. Mr. Hulke obeyed the summons with all possible expedition. On his arrival, the Duke complained of uneasiness about the

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chest and stomach. He was then in a state of perfect consciousness, and answered the inquiries of his surgeon collectedly. Some medicine was prescribed; and whilst it was being prepared, his Grace took some tea and toast. Soon after he had left the castle, Mr. Hulke received a second communication, announcing that the Duke was much worse, having had a fit similar to those to which he had been occasionally subject. Mr. Hulke returned immediately to his room, and found him breathing very laboriously, and perfectly insensible. Before Mr. Hulke's arrival, his valet had applied a mustard poultice to his chest,—his master's usual remedy under similar attacks. Dr. M'Arthur arrived soon afterwards, and prescribed a mustard emetic, but it produced no effect. The Duke became very restless, and tried to turn on his left side. Finding, on raising him from a horizontal position, that his breathing was less encumbered, Mr. Hulke placed him in a chair, but was compelled immediately afterwards to remove him to the bed. His pulse rallied for a short time, and then declined; and at twenty-five minutes past three o'clock he breathed his last. So gentle was the transition that it was not until a mirror had been placed before his lips that it was ascertained that life was extinct.

The shock occasioned by the intelligence of the event was most profound; for never did the death of any subject create so universal a feeling of grief before. Lord and Lady Charles Wellesley happened to be in the house, but the attack had overwhelmed the Duke so suddenly that he lost all consciousness before he could give any directions. Two physicians had been telegraphed from London, but they did not reach Walmer Castle in time to be of any use. The Duke of Wellington expressed his desire, in his will, that his remains should be disposed of as the gracious mistress whom he had served so faithfully should direct; and her Majesty resolved accordingly, that a public funeral, marked by every demonstration of respect which it was possible to display, should be afforded to them. It became necessary, however, to give her Majesty's wishes due significance, by awaiting the authority of Parliament, and that authority was given by acclamation.

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CHAPTER XXVI

ANECDOTES OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

WE have avoided, with very few exceptions, the introduction of anecdotes into the body of our narrative, for reasons that will be obvious to most of our readers. There is, however, no reason why we should not append a few of those which seem to illustrate the more salient points of his character, and we do so accordingly: "the child," Wordsworth says, "is father to the man," but we find nothing in the Duke of Wellington's boyhood, related on anything like sufficient authority, which appears to confirm, in his instance, the correctness of the theory. He thrashed one or two boys at school, and took care of the pet toad of another absentee. He watched his school-fellows at their play, and quickly gave intelligence to those engaged in the game if anything unfair had been attempted. Like most boys, he cut his name on a door at Eton, and was not pleased in after life to find that it had been obliterated. He beat Bobus Smith soundly, and had he met him in after life would no doubt have thrashed him still more thoroughly, for Bobus, though esteemed a wit of his age, was a very great blockhead.

HIS ESCAPES.—Wellington's escapes from danger were remarkable. There was rarely an action in which some of his personal attendants were not killed or wounded. At Vittoria he passed unharmed through the fire of the French centre bristling with cannon, for there eighty pieces were in battery. At Sorauren he wrote a memorandum on the bridge, while the enemy were in actual possession of the village. During the bloody contest that ensued, for a time he sat upon a height within close musket range of the enemy, watching the progress of the battle; and, in the evening, his danger was still more imminent. "He had carried with him," says General Napier, "towards Echallar, half a company of the 43rd as an escort, and placed a sergent, named Blood, with a party to watch in front, while he examined his maps. The French, who were close at hand, sent a detachment to cut off the party; and such was the nature of the ground, that their troops,

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rushing on at speed, would infallibly have fallen unawares upon Lord Wellington, if Blood, a young, intelligent man, seeing the danger, had not, with surprising activity, leaping rather than running down the precipitous rocks he was posted on, given the General notice: and, as it was, the French arrived in time to send a volley of shot after him as he galloped away." It was said of Napoleon that he bore a charmed life; and certainly a special Providence watched over that of Wellington. "God covered his head in battle, and not a hair of it was scathed."

THE DUKE'S GRIEF FOR THE LOSS OF HIS COMPANIONS IN ARMS.—One of the three letters written by the Duke from the field of Waterloo was a brief note, which, having enumerated some who had fallen, ended thus:—" *I have escaped unhurt; the finger of Providence was on me.*" What must have been the intensity of feeling which dictated these emphatic words, we leave the reader to imagine. When the dreadful fight was over, the Duke's feelings, so long kept at the highest tension, gave way, and as he rode amid the groans of the wounded, and the reeking carnage, and heard the rout of the vanquished and the shouts of the victors, fainter and fainter through the gloom of night, he wept, and soon after wrote the words just quoted from his letter. Again: "My heart," he feelingly writes, "is broken by the terrible loss I have sustained in my old friends and companions, and my poor soldiers. Believe me, nothing, excepting a battle lost, can be half so melancholy as a battle won; the bravery of my troops has hitherto saved me from the greater evil; but to win such a battle as this of Waterloo, at the expense of so many gallant friends, could only be termed a heavy misfortune, but for the result to the public." On the morning after the fight of Waterloo, orders were transmitted to the proper authorities to make the usual specific account of killed and wounded, and forthwith to bring it to the Commander-in-Chief. Dr. Hume, principal medical attendant on his Grace's staff, on preparing the list, hastened to the Duke's tent, and giving the pass-word, was ushered in by the sentinel. His Grace was asleep. The Doctor was aware of the fatigue the Duke's system had undergone, and hesitated to wake him. The order

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of the Duke, on the other hand, had been issued with more than usual peremptoriness; and the Doctor ventured to give the Duke a shake. In an instant, his Grace, dressed as he was in full regimentals, was sitting on the bedside. "Read," was the significant command. For more than an hour had the Doctor read aloud the harrowing list, and then his voice failed, and his throat choked with emotion. He tried to continue, but could not. Instinctively he raised his eyes to the Duke. Wellington was still sitting, with his hands raised and clasped convulsively before him. Big tears were coursing down his cheeks. In a moment, the Duke was conscious of the Doctor's silence, and recovering himself, looked up and caught his eye. "Read on," was the stern command, and while his physician continued for four hours, the "Iron Duke" sat by the bedside, clasping his hands, and rocking his body to and fro, with emotion. Such was the man his contemporaries charged with want of feeling.

THOUGHTS AT WATERLOO.—During the battle the two armies, for a while separated by the heaps of slain, assaulted each other again, hand to hand; amidst the smoke of incessant discharge the *mêlée* was so thick, so confused, and so furious, that neither the eye nor the voice of the generals could any longer discern or command the respective movements. It rained death around Wellington. His surviving companions of the battle, Vincent, Alava, and Hill, thought all was lost; but he alone still continued to hope. "Have you any orders to give?" asked the chief of his staff, with an anxious voice, which seemed to hint at the prudence of a retreat. "None," replied the general. "But you may be killed," said the other, "and your grace may wish to communicate your thoughts to the next in command." "My thoughts!" replied the Duke; "I have no other than to stand my ground to the last man!"

"PRIVATE AFFAIRS."—The Duke once said that he never knew any army whose officers had so many "private affairs." At the termination of one of the campaigns, when the troops went into cantonments, there was a long list of applications founded on this plea. He ran his eyes

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over the names until he came to one applicant who asked leave—to get married. “Oh!” said the Duke, “I can understand what this man means; let him go.”

NAPOLEON.—During the day, at Waterloo, the colonel commanding the British artillery observed to the Duke: “I have got the exact range of the spot where Buonaparte and his staff are standing. If your Grace will allow me, I think I can pick some of them off.” “No, no,” replied he; “generals-in-chief have something else to do in a great battle besides firing at each other.”

HIS LOVE OF CHILDREN.—“I’m considered a great favourite with children,” said the Duke of Wellington to Mr. Weigall, the artist. “I was at the house of Lord S—— the other day, and there was a fine little fellow there, who had evidently been told that I was coming, and was on the look out for me. He called soldiers ‘Rub-a-dubs.’ As soon as I went in he came up to me and said, ‘You are not a Rub-a-dub at all, for you don’t wear a red coat!’” His Grace soon, however, remarked that he was not always fortunate with children. “I was lately in the house of a French marquis; they brought in a little child to see me; I wanted to take it in my arms, but the child seemed to have a great aversion to me, and shrunk from me. So I said to the little thing, ‘Pourquoi?’ and, clinging to the nurse, it said, ‘Il bat tout le monde!’ I suppose she had heard her nurse say so, and thought I should beat *her*.”

The Duke was remarkably fond of young children, and kept in a cabinet several half-sovereigns, having a hole drilled through them, through which was passed a blue ribbon; and whenever any of the young nobility visited him, they frequently went away in raptures, having had one of these now precious mementoes placed over their shoulders by the kind old man. Among the last thus honoured were the Ladies Scott, the youthful daughters of the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch. It is a well-known fact that his Grace frequently carried about his person a number of new shillings, for the purpose of distributing among the juveniles of the more humble classes of society.

HIS FAVOURITE CHARGER “COPENHAGEN.”—The fol-

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lowing facts relative to this remarkable animal, whose career in war was matchless, if we except that of Napoleon's splendid white charger Marengo, are gathered from a recent number of the *Sporting Magazine*. Copenhagen derived his name from the city in which he was foaled, his dam having been taken out there in the expedition of 1807 by the late Field-Marshal Grosvenor. The horse, we are told, was not only thoroughbred, but he was also of distinguished pedigree, being on his father's side a grandson of the celebrated Eclipse, and on his mother's of a well-known horse of his day, John Bull. Copenhagen did not remain long in the hands of General Grosvenor; he sold him to the Marquis of Londonderry, then adjutant-general to the Peninsular army, who sent him, with other horses, to Lisbon, in 1813. While there he was selected and bought with another horse by Colonel Charles Wood, at the price of 400 guineas, for his Grace the Duke of Wellington, with whom he soon became, as he continued, an especial favourite. The writer of the article informs us that at Vinniera and Waterloo the Duke used no other horse; "Vinniera," however, must be obviously a mistake for "Vittoria," the former action having taken place in 1808, long before the horse landed in Portugal, whereas the latter, the greatest battle fought between the two armies throughout the war, was fought in 1813, the year he came over from England. On the memorable day of Waterloo, though the great captain had been on his back for eighteen hours, Copenhagen gave little sign of being beat, for on the Duke patting him on the quarter, as he dismounted after the battle, the game little horse struck out as playfully as if he had only had an hour's ride in the park. For endurance of fatigue, indeed, he was more than usually remarkable; and for the duty he had to fulfil as proportionately valuable. However hard the day, Copenhagen never refused his corn, though he ate it, after a very unusual manner with horses, lying down.

For many years Copenhagen was one of the most interesting sights at Strathfieldsaye, on which domain he was pensioned off, and where he at length died at an illustrious old age. The Duke rarely omitted to visit him, and the

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ladies of the family made him an especial pet. And he deserved this, for "old Copenhagen" had one of the surest and best characteristics of true courage—an extremely good and docile temper. He was, in fact, one of those "noble creatures" who liked being noticed, and who kissed hands and ate his apples with all possible grace. Copenhagen, whose colour was a full rich chestnut, was a small horse, standing scarcely more than fifteen hands high; he possessed, however, great muscular power. His general appearance denoted his Arabian blood, which his enduring qualities served further to identify. Though not much suited from his size for crossing the country, it is stated that the Duke occasionally rode him to the hounds. From this it will be seen that the old horse derived his name from his accidental birth-place, rather than because that name is associated with his great master's first deeds in European warfare. The paddock in which Copenhagen was interred contains a noble cluster of elms in the centre, and is sheltered on every side. A small circular railing encloses the grave. Old age prostrated him in 1825.

Miss Mitford relates some amusing particulars of Copenhagen. "He died," she informs us, "at the age of twenty-seven. He was therefore in his prime on the day of Waterloo, when the Duke rode him for seventeen hours and a half, without dismounting. After his return, the paddock was assigned to him in which he passed the rest of his life in the most perfect comfort that can be imagined; fed twice a day (latterly upon oats broken for him), with a comfortable stable to retire to, and a rich pasture in which to range. The late amiable Duchess used regularly to feed him with bread, and this kindness had given him the habit (especially after her death) of approaching every lady with the most confiding familiarity. He had been a fine animal; but latterly he exhibited an interesting specimen of natural decay, in a state as nearly that of nature as can well be found in a civilised country. He had lost an eye from age, and had become lean and feeble; and in the manner in which he approached even a casual visitor there was much of the demand of sympathy, the appeal to human kindness, which one has so often observed from a very old dog towards his master. Poor Copen-

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hagen, who, when alive, furnished so many bequests from his mane and tail to enthusiastic young ladies, who had hair set in broaches and rings, was, after being interred with military honours, dug up by some miscreant (never, I believe, discovered) and one of his hoofs cut off, it is presumed for a memorial, although one that would hardly go in the compass of a ring."

HIS HABITS OF LIFE.—The Spartan simplicity of his habits was maintained to the last, and the only relaxation which he permitted himself was an occasional extra hour's rest at Walmer. In his eighty-fourth year he was still the same abstemious, active, self-denying man he had ever been, rising early, never latterly tasting wine or spirits, taking regular exercise on foot and on horseback, sleeping on a hard uncurtained couch, and rejecting even the luxury of a downy pillow. A story is told of a highland chief who, finding his son reclining his head on a ball of snow, rebuked the effeminate indulgence by kicking it from under him. The Duke used a pillow, but it was an exceedingly hard one, stuffed with horsehair, and lined with washleather, and he carried it about with him wherever he went. Up to the last his daily toilet was performed without the slightest assistance. It took him from half-past six to nine every morning to dress; but even the operation of shaving he did all himself, and at his age that must have been nearly as difficult a feat as winning a battle in early life. Though in his eighty-fourth year, he still wrote a firm hand, and carried on a large correspondence—curious confirmations of the strength of nerve required to form a great commander.

BENEVOLENCE.—The following act speaks at once as to the benevolence of the Duke of Wellington's heart. The son of one of his oldest and best officers in India held a commission in one of the cavalry regiments; he was quartered in the west of Ireland, became a captive to a young and beautiful daughter of Erin, and a marriage was the result. A few years obliged him to sell his commission for the payment of debts and the support of an increasing family. He tried his hand at teaching fencing, horsemanship, &c., but was not successful. The lady and her children retired to some relatives in Ireland, while the

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husband sought an interview with the Duke, who, in respect to the memory of the father, procured the son a barrack-master's place in Canada. Arrangements were made for joining a ship going out with troops, and the Duke also procured a passage therein for the wife and children. But the question of outfit and support was a difficult one. His friends advised application to the Duke, and, after a short interview on the subject, the latter stated he would consider what was best to be done, and in two days wrote a letter to the gentleman in these words : — "Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington will be happy to arrange for Mr. — proceeding to his appointment, and requests his being at the Horse Guards at three to-morrow." Upon this interview the Duke handed him the form of a note of hand for 200*l.* to sign, to be payable out of his pay, and his (the Duke's) solicitor at once effected a life assurance in the Duke's favour, a cheque was handed for the money, and the gentleman, with his wife and children, proceeded on their voyage.

Happiness and hope appeared now in the prospective, but the father was never to reach Canada. On the voyage thither he ruptured a blood-vessel and died, leaving his wife a widow, and his little ones orphans. Poverty was before them in a foreign land, and they struggled on for a time. The lady had very properly apprised the Duke of her bereavement, and by the return of post she received a letter of condolence, and also the enclosure of her deceased husband's note of hand, advising her to return. On her arrival in England, his Grace advised her to employ her talents in teaching, and gave her a letter to his solicitor to procure her a house for such purpose. He obtained for her only boy (her other children being girls) an entrance into the Military School, and placed in her hands a cheque of the — Assurance Office, which he stated he had received on her husband's life.

THE END



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